

THE MAN OF SORROWS;

A COURSE OF FIVE SUFFERINGS OF

OUR SAVIOUR.

BY

CHARLES DOYNE SILLERY,

HONORARY "AN ESSAY ON THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE, AND
EVIDENCES OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD," &c. &c.

' In every pang that rends the heart,
The Man of Sorrows had a part,
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief "

' Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the
world.'—John 1: 29

1* SECOND EDITION.

W LONDON
WILLIAM DARTON AND SON,
HOLBORN HILL.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY STEWART AND SONS,
OLD BAILEY.

DEDICATION

TO •

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCESS VICTORIA.

MADAM,

It must ever be a source of the greatest satisfaction to an Author to be honoured with the patronage of those whom he feels it his duty to reverence and obey : and the satisfaction in which your Royal Highness has been pleased to accept the dedication of this

little work, will never cease to be to me a subject of grateful reflection, as well as an incitement to the utmost exertions in promoting the cause of piety and virtue.

It is trust in the Almighty and the sense of his favour that diffuses the greatest lustre around the human character in all stations of life: "God honours those who honour him"—so may HE continue to bestow his choicest gifts upon your illustrious relatives the King and Queen, and your Royal Mother the Duchess of Kent: and when it shall please the Divine Majesty to call your Royal Highness to the throne of these realms, may you be blessed and rendered a blessing to your people; may your days be long, and your reign peaceful and happy; and after serving God faithfully upon earth, may you be in possession of a crown, of which the glory will

never fade, and the felicity never be diminished.

This is the sincere and earnest prayer of him, who is, with the greatest respect,

MADAM,•

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient and devoted Servant,

CHARLES DOYNE MILLERY.

NOTICE

FROM A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

AMONG the numerous losses and disappointments to which mankind are liable, none perhaps are felt more keenly, in a public point of view, than the decease of literary and gifted characters, especially when their talents and acquirements were devoted not to the mere gratification of the imagination, or the cause of a particular sect or party, but to the best interests of men—their advancement in knowledge and happiness. Amongst the number of those whose loss, in the inscrutable providence of Heaven, we have recently had to deplore, is the death of CHARLES DOYNE SILLERY, the talented and estimable author of the following pages.

For some time previous to this event his health was extremely delicate, but he still continued to prosecute his literary labours, and wrote several

short pieces, both in prose and verse; and when informed that a new edition of the present little volume was called for, he cheerfully undertook its revision. Happily, he was able to accomplish his task, as the corrections and alterations he has made are valuable and important. Little, however, did his strength permit him to do beyond this; for shortly after he had placed the copy in the hands of the writer of this notice, for the purpose of publication, he was seized with a painful and lingering complaint. But so intently was his mind set upon this work, and so desirous that it should be free from errors, that he would not intrust to other hands its superintendence through the Press, but revised the proof-sheets himself at intervals during his illness. Having, after a great effort, accomplished this, he carefully enclosed them, and wrote on the envelope "corrected and finished," as if conscious that this would be the last of his literary labours; and, probably, in allusion to the words of his divine Master when on the cross, whose sufferings and death he had so faithfully and graphically portrayed.

Nor were Mr. Sillery's apprehensions ill-founded, for, a few days afterwards, his illness terminated

fatally. This painful event occurred at his family residence, Edinburgh, on the 16th of April, in the 30th year of his age. It is, however, a gratifying reflection to know, that though cut off in the very prime of manhood, and in the vigour of his intellectual powers, that he was not unprepared for the messenger of death. He was a sincere and firm believer in the Scriptures, enjoying their consolations in his own soul, and exemplifying in an eminent degree their precepts in his life: in his intercourse with society, he was upright, honourable, and liberal; and ever evinced the most benevolent desire to advance the best interests of his fellow-creatures. His piety was genuine, but not ostentatious: he cherished a true devotedness to God, and love to his Saviour, with the most lofty and heart-cheering ideas of their character, as evinced in the following beautiful poem, entitled “Blessed be Thy Name for ever.”

1.

God of goodness! God of grace!
 Oh! what bliss from thee we gather!
 God of all the worlds in space!
 Living—everlasting Father!
 God of glory! God of nature!
 Of all good, the God and giver!
 God of every living creature,—
 Blessed be thy name for ever!

II.

By the Saviour of my soul—
 By his cross—his blood—his sorrow .
 Still unchanged as seasons roll :—
 The same to day—the same to-morrow !
 By the everlasting home,
 Where we meet, no more to sever—
 By the life and light to come.—
 Blessed be thy name for ever !

III.

Suns that rise in clouded glory—
 Moons that roll in boundless space—
 Mountains mighty—forests hoary—
 Herbs and flowers in every place—
 Seas from rock to rock rebounding—
 Lightnings from the tempest's quiver—
 Winds and waters wild resounding ;—
 Bless his holy name for ever !

IV.

All my prospects, plans, and pleasures ,
 Wealth and genius—faith and worth—
 All my glowing bosom treasures :—
 Bless the God of heaven and earth !
 All my soul—my strength—my mind—
 All my hopes, with one endeavour ;
 Panting—burning—calmed—combined—
 Bless his holy name for ever !

In the heaven of heavens on high ;
 In the earth—the sea—the river ,
 In the starry-spangled sky ;—
 Blessed be thy name for ever !
 “ Blessed ! ” shout with one accord ;
 Shout triumphant—ceasing never,
 “ Holy !—holy !—holy Lord !
 Blessed be thy name for ever ! ’

While, therefore, the friends of religion may mourn for the loss of a faithful labourer in the cause of truth, they mourn not as those who have no hope : having “ walked with God ” on earth, he has gone to enter into the enjoyment of the beatific vision above. “ Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord ; for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”

As a writer, Mr Sillery occupies an eminent station amongst his contemporaries. His productions display talents of no ordinary character, a sound judgment, a correct taste, and extensive reading. His “ Man of Sorrows,” though unostentatious in its pretensions, is admirably adapted for the instruction and improvement of youth, for whom the Author especially intended it ; and even the advanced Christian will not fail to derive advantage from its pages. It is written in an in-

interesting style, breathing a benevolent and affectionate spirit, and presents to the reader unquestionable evidence that the writer himself was deeply impressed with the interesting and important nature of his subject. To adopt his own words, when describing the work of another author, he “unites most beautifully the dignity of truth, with the earnestness of persuasion, and preserves throughout, the character of one whose own faith is firmly established, and who is solicitous to bring others into the same condition.” In it he has judiciously arranged the accounts given by the four Evangelists of the sufferings and death of the Saviour, so as to form a connected and continuous narrative, and thereby has not only illustrated the fulfilment of those prophecies that were delivered beforehand concerning Him, but entirely removed the apparent discrepancies that occur to the youthful mind when perusing separately the respective histories of the four Evangelists. He has also from the simple narratives of the Sacred Writers, successfully shown the nature and design of the Sufferings and Death of the ‘Man of Sorrows;’—that they were not those of a mere man, however good or benevolent; but were strictly vicarious in their nature, and de-

signed for the salvation of all who might believe in His name ; that He bore *our* sins and carried *our* sorrows ; that for *us* He was stricken of God and afflicted ; that He bore *our* sins in his own body on the tree, and by His stripes *we* are healed :— that

“ He wept, that we might smile ;
He bled, that ~~we~~ we might never die.”

“ Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience man are made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Here, in accordance with this all-important fact, is the anthem of the redeemed in heaven.—“ Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God ; to Him be glory, and dominion, and power, for ever and ever. *Amen.*”

Thus has our esteemed Author furnished a most valuable manual for youth, calculated to inform their understanding, strengthen their faith, and imbue their minds with a suitable love towards Him who so loved them as to give Himself for them ;

and thus, "though dead, he yet speaketh." And that he may continue, through this little Volume, to instruct youth in the things which concern their best interests, till He who was once the "Man of Sorrows" shall come again as the Lord from heaven, "to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe," is the fervent wish of the Writer.

August, 1836.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

I HAVE often wished that such a treatise as the following had fallen into my hands at the commencement of my inquiries regarding the sufferings of “the Lord of Glory.”

The impressions of our youth are generally deep and lasting;* it is then that the young heart—which hath not yet been schooled in the wickedness of the world—is more sensitive and alive to the sufferings and sorrows of its fellow-creatures; and, as the imagination is then easily affected, and vividly brought into activity, giving a colouring to all the associations of our after days,—there is no

’Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,
Our most important are our earliest years;
The mind, impressible and soft, with ease
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,
And through life’s labyrinth holds fast the clue
That education gives her, false or true.

COWPER.

period of our existence when the contemplation of the sufferings of "the Man of Sorrows," tends more to interest, affect, and purify the heart; and to humble—Oh, God of love! the proud spirit of man,—

" Not in his innocence to trust,
But, how before Thee in the dust
And through his Saviour's blood alone,
To look for mercy at Thy throne."

To the young, therefore, this volume is especially dedicated: and although the intelligent reader will perceive that my plan has not hitherto been anticipated, I resign all claim of originality to those good and gifted individuals who have long trodden the hallowed path before me.

" The triumphs of a dying Saviour's love,
The mysteries of redemption's glorious plan,
Are ever new to seraph hosts above;
Shall they be less to fallen and guilty man?"

Much, indeed, hath been written on the subject of our Saviour's sufferings, but those works which have come under my observation, have either been too voluminous and expensive for common use, or, too slight and superficial to answer the end which I had proposed: while, on the other hand, the an-

notations attached to the Scriptures are scattered and unconnected; and the various sermons, constantly issuing from the press, are more “reflections arising from the subject,” than a dissertation on the actual sufferings themselves.

I now commit this humble performance to the patronage of the God of Truth, and to the impartial consideration of those who desire to know nothing “save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

Blessed is the man who hath the Lord of Glory for his friend! and blessed is he, who humbleth his spirit, that the Spirit of God may dwell within him!*

Blessed is the man who overcometh the world; and blessed is he who hath the hope of everlasting life—“the witness in himself!”—for “this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John xvii. 3.)

“It might seem at first sight”—says the Rev. S. Carr—“as if the Apostle had resolved on a limited range of subjects, when he rejected from his ministry every thing ‘save Jesus Christ, and him cru-

* “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”—Romans x. 9.

cified ;' but, in fact, the doctrine of the cross, like a golden thread, runs through the whole line of Scripture truth. In the cross of Christ we behold man's lost and helpless state ; ' If one died for all, then were all dead.' In the cross of Christ we discover the doctrine of justification by faith ! ' As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' In the cross of Christ we see the dutiful necessity for good works ; ' He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' In Christ crucified we see an example to the Christian, teaching us, ' to be crucified to the world, and to be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren.*' In

* Thomas à Kempis says,—“ In the cross is life, in the cross is health, in the cross is protection from every enemy ; from the cross are derived heavenly meekness, true fortitude, the joys of the Spirit, the conquest of self, the perfection of holiness !

“ There is no redemption, no foundation for the hope of divine life, but in the cross. Take up thy cross, therefore, and follow Jesus in the path that leads to everlasting peace. He hath gone before, bearing that cross upon which he died for thee ; that thou mightest follow, patiently bearing thine own cross, and upon that die to thyself for him : and if we

Christ crucified, we find the motive to every good word and work ; for when the Apostle would urge his brethren by the most influential of all considerations, to dedicate themselves to the service of God, he refers to the cross of Christ, and says, ' Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are *his*.' A crucified Saviour, then, is to be the theme of our ministrations, if we would preach ' as of the oracles of God ;' whether we seek to convert the sinner, to reclaim the wanderer, to comfort the afflicted, or to edify the believer. A crucified Saviour must be our theme, if we would desire hereafter ' to give up our account with joy, and not with grief.' "

To " Jesus Christ, and him crucified," therefore, let us turn :—to the everlasting " Rock of ages" —to the " only begotten of the Father," —to the " Lamb of God,"—whose blood speaks peace and reconciliation ; (Col. i. 20.) purchase (Acts xx. 28.) and redemption ; (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) remission, (Heb. ix. 22.) liberty, (Heb. x. 13.) and justification ; (Rom. v. 9.) cleansing from all sin, (1 John

1:3) with him, we shall also live with him ; ' If we are partakers of his sufferings, we shall be partakers also of his glory.' "

i. 7.) and purging from all dead works, to serve the living God ! (Heb. ix. 13, 14.)

Ye that dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, look upon him and ~~serve~~ ! (John iii. 14, 15.) Look upon him, O ~~man~~ ! who went through all thy temptations, and all thy dejections,—all thy sorrows, and desertions, and rejections ! (Matt. iv. 3 to 12, and xxvi. Mark xv. 34. ~~▲~~ Luke xxii. 44. Matt. xxvi. 38.) Look upon the Lord of Glory bleeding and dying for ~~THEE~~ upon the cross ! “ Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world ! ”

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THREE years have passed away since the first edition of this Discourse was presented to the public: since that time I have had much occasion to bless God, that, through his grace, I have been led to ponder frequently and fervently upon the important truths contained in this volume. If the angels of God desire to look into the mysteries of redemption, no wonder that the more I have contemplated this awful and glorious revelation, the more I have been amazed, astonished, and confounded! With a delight which I never experienced in the composition of any work before, I have proceeded in my labours with the present—stimulated to exertion by the favourable reception which the former edition has met with in all parts of the United Kingdom—with the distinguished patronage which it has received—and the honourable testimonials borne towards it by the British press.

"The Man of Sorrows," has been added to the title-page of the present edition; which, in revising, correcting, and enlarging, has been so much altered and augmented, as almost to appear an entirely new publication.

The events, as they are recorded by the four Evangelists I have inserted in their order, to the best of my ability; and where I conceived the simplicity, the power, and the pathos of Scripture were most effective, I have illustrated the narrative with passages from Holy Writ.

One short notice selected from one of the many Reviews with which my little work has been honoured, will further elucidate the nature and character of this volume, and render it unnecessary for me to add any thing further on the subject.

"This is a little volume laying claim to no originality, except that of a very useful design—namely, to form a connected view of the most useful and deeply interesting period of our Lord's history—his hours of aggravated anguish. Minutely tracing the sinless Sufferer from the Garden of Gethsemane to the cross of Calvary,* and dwelling upon the latter agonizing scene, the author supplies from the varied sources of antiquity the additional circumstances of ignominy and suffering which are implied, but not expressly recorded or explained, in the Gospel narrative. The impression which such a concentration is calculated to make, and especially upon the minds of youth (for whom it is chiefly intended) may be estimated from the interest, the untiring interest with which this part of the sacred records is attended to, even as represented

* Now, from his last supper to the tomb.

by a single Evangelist. What must be the effect of the combined accounts of all the Evangelists elucidated by the designs of Providence, and the customary punishments of the time, by which man intended to exhibit the deadliest hatred towards the Lord of life? Nor does the author suffer the valuable tendency of this treatise to be *perverted* into mere sympathy—or, if this be the course in which our affections *naturally* move at such a description, by practically applying our Lord's tender admonition, “ Weep not for me, weep for yourselves,”—he turns aside our sorrow to the *cause* of his suffering, and endeavours to substitute a more useful feeling—that of self-concern—and this in language which, whether it is more distinguished by intrinsic beauty, or by the spirit of poetry which pervades it, we leave the reader to decide.”—

Dublin University Magazine.



THE MAN OF SORROWS.

THE truly great become more illustrious by adversity ; without adversity, something is wanting in their character, in order to render them examples of patience and fortitude, wisdom and holiness, long-suffering and humility. *

Sorrow seems to be the soil in which true wisdom most delights to flourish. Hence we find that all the greatest, that is, that all the best of men, have been born in tribulation and nourished in adversity. — “ Whom the Lord loveth he correct-

If misfortune comes, she brings along
The bravest virtues. And so many great
Illustrious spirits have conversed with woe,—
Have in her school been taught, as are enough
To consecrate distress.”

THOMSON.

eth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.”* “For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”†

Now, since “the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain;”‡ since “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God;”§ since “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge:”|| no man can be called a wise man who possesses not the inestimable wisdom “that is from above,” “more precious than rubies, the merchandise of silver, or the gain of fine gold;”¶ which is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”**

But the same book of the sacred writings which informs us, that, “in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow,”†† also tells us, that “it is better to go to the

* Proverbs iii. 12.

† Hebrews xii. 7.

‡ 1 Cor. iii. 20, and Psalm xciv. 11.

§ 1 Cor. iii. 19, and Job v. xiii.

|| Proverbs i. 7, and ix. 10. Job xxviii. 28. Psalm cxi. 10.

¶ Proverbs iii. 14, 15; viii. 11, 19, and xvi. 16. Job xxviii. 13, &c. Psalm xix. 10, and cxix. 72, 127.

** James iii. 17. See also 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7. Philipp iv. 8. Heb. xii. 14. Gal. v. 22.

†† Eccl. i. 18.

house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting;" that "sorrow is better than laughter;" and, that "the heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools in the house of mirth."*

Accordingly, we find that as soon as the Apostles, who spoke "the wisdom of God,"† began to preach the Gospel of their blessed Redeemer and his resurrection, their sorrows and sufferings commenced: the Jewish rulers, in defiance of conviction, laid hold on them; and having confined and scourged them, strictly prohibited their speaking any more in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.‡ Then

* Eccl. vii. 2, 3, 4.

† 1 Cor. ii. 7.

‡ "But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, what shall we do to these men for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no farther among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name." Acts iv. 15, 16, 17.

"And when they had called the Apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go." Acts v. 40.

• This evinced a consciousness, on the part of the Jewish rulers, that they were unable to support their cause by the fair exertion of reason; as they would not, in that case, have had recourse to the interposition of brutal force.

Stephen was murdered,* shortly afterwards James beheaded;† and the rest of the disciples were scattered abroad into strange cities,‡ where they suffered all manner of persecutions. By one sort of people, insulted as fools and madmen; by another treated with the most savage cruelty, as blasphemers of the gods, as seducers of the people, and as disturbers of the public peace.§ Indeed they assure

* “ And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord lay not this sin to their charge. And when he said this, he fell asleep.” Acts vii. 59, 60.

† “ Now about this time, Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church, and he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also.” Acts xii. 1, 2, 3.

‡ “ And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles.” Acts viii. 1.

§ “ Now they which were scattered abroad, upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phœnicie, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.” Acts xi. 19.

§ Compare Acts v. 40; vii. 57, 58; viii. 1; ix. 1, 2; xxvi. 10, 11; ix. 23, 24; xii. 1—4; xiii. 50; xiv. 5, 19; xvi. 19—24; xviii. 12, 13; xx. 3, xxi. 27, 28; xxii. 22; xxxiii. 14—which all relate to the persecutions of the Christians.

us that their Lord had often warned them of this;* that they themselves expected it,† and thought it necessary to admonish their followers to look for the same treatment also;‡ encouraging each other to resist even to blood.§ And their converts were so thoroughly satisfied with the evidence which they gave of their mission, that they encountered all manner of persecutions, and cheerfully ventured estate liberty, and life itself, on the truth of the facts they

* Matt. x. 16—25. (xxiii. 34, “Behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city.”) Mark x. 29, 30, 39. Luke xiv. 27; xxi. 12, 17. John xv. 20 21; xvi. 2—33; xx. 18, 19. Acts ix. 16.

† “And now behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts xx. 22, 23, 24; xxi. 13. 1 Cor. iv. 9. 2 Cor. xii. 10. 1 Thess. iii. 3, 4. 2 Tim. iv. 6.

‡ “We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” Acts xiv. 22. “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Tim. iii. 12, and iv. 5. James v. 10, 11. 1 Peter ii. 20, 21; iv. 1, 12—1 and v. 9.

§ Hebrews xii. 4.

asserted; as plainly appears from many passages in the Epistles; which never would have been written, if these first Christians had not been in a persecuted condition.* Time and space would fail me were I to attempt particularizing how these unrighteous methods were pursued in succeeding ages, and distant countries. The savage cruelties of Nero to those innocent and holy men were such, as raised the pity even of their enemies.† Yet,

* “As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Rom. viii. 36. Compare 1 Cor. iv. 11—13; xv. 29—32. 2 Cor. i. 8, 9; iv. 8—11; vi. 4, 5, 9; xi. 23—27. Gal. vi. 17. Philip. i. 28—30. 1 Thess. i. 6; ii. 14, 15. 2 Thess. i. 4—7. 2 Tim. i. 8; ii. 4, 9, 12, 13; iii. 11, 12. Heb. x. 32—34. James ii. 6, v. 10, 11. 1 Peter ii. 19, 20, iii. 14—17; iv. 1. 12—16. Rev. ii. 10. 13.

† I shall here insert a quotation from Tacitus, well known to every scholar. The passage was written about seventy years after Christ's death, and relates to transactions which took place about thirty years after that event.—Speaking of the fire which happened at Rome in the time of Nero, and of the suspicions which were entertained that the emperor himself was concerned in causing it, the historian proceeds in his narrative and observations thus:

“But neither these exertions, nor his largesses to the people, nor his offerings to the gods, did away the infamous imputation under which Nero lay, of having ordered the city to be set on fire. To put an end, therefore to this report, he

amidst all these persecutions, so great was the number of those, who were proselyted to Christi-

laid the guilt, and inflicted the most cruel punishments upon a set of people, who were holden in abhorrence for their crimes, and called by the vulgar, *Christians*. The founder of that name was Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, thus checked for a while, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, where the evil originated, but through Rome also, whither every thing bad upon the earth finds its way, and is practised. Some, who confessed their sect, were first seized, and afterwards, by their information, a vast multitude were apprehended, who were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning Rome as of hatred to mankind. Their sufferings at their execution were aggravated by insult and mockery; for, some were disguised in the skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs; some were crucified; and others were wrapped in pitched shirts and set on fire when the day closed, that they might serve as lights to illuminate the night. Nero lent his own gardens for these executions, and exhibited, at the same time, a mock Circensian entertainment; being a spectator of the whole, in the dress of a charioteer, sometimes mingling with the crowd on foot, and sometimes viewing the spectacle from his car. This conduct made the sufferers pitied; and though they were criminals, and deserving the severest punishments, yet they were considered as sacrificed, not so much out of regard to the public good, as to gratify the cruelty of one man."

Juvenal, a writer of the same age, and intending, it should seem, to commemorate the cruelties exercised under

anity by the preaching of the Apostles, that not only myriads of believing Jews assembled at the

Nero's government, has the following lines, (Satire i. ver. 155.)

Pone Tigellinum, tædâ lucebis in illâ
Quâ stantes ardent, qui fixo gutture fumant,
Et latum mediâ sulcum deducit arenâ.

"Describe Tigellinus (a creature of Nero,) and you shall suffer the same punishment with those who stand burning in their own flame and smoke; their head being held up by a stake fixed to their chin, till they make a long stream of blood and melted sulphur on the ground."

In the well-known letter written by the Church of Smyrna soon after the death of Polycarp, who, it will be remembered, had lived with Saint John; and which letter is entitled, A Relation of that Bishop's Martyrdom. — Speaking of the Martyrs, they say:—

"Who can choose but admire the greatness of their minds, and that admirable patience and love of their Master, which then appeared in them! Who, when they were so flayed with whipping, that the frame and structure of their bodies were laid open to their very inward veins and arteries, nevertheless endured it. In like manner, those who were condemned to the beasts, and kept a long time in prison, underwent many cruel torments, being forced to lie upon sharp spikes laid under their bodies, and tormented with divers other sorts of punishments; that so, if it were possible, the tyrant, by the length of their sufferings, might have brought them to deny Christ." (Rel. Mor. Pol. c. ii.) "These miserable men have no doubt but they shall be immortal and live for ever; therefore they condemn death, and many surrender themselves to suffer-

Feast of Pentecost;* but there were congregations of Christians in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Colosse, Thessalonica, Philippa, Laodicea,† Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia,‡ Crete,§ Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bi-

nings. Moreover, their first lawgiver has taught them that they are all brethren, when once they have turned and renounced the gods of the Greeks, and worship this Master of theirs who was crucified, and engage to live according to his laws. They have also a sovereign contempt for all the things of this world, and look upon them as common." That is, *unhallowed*, as in 1 Sym. xxi. 4, or *unclean*, as in Acts xi. 9. Lucian de Morte Peregrini, t. i. p. 565. ed. Græv. (Paley's Evidences of Christianity.—Tacitus' Annals, Book xv. sect. 44.)

Suetonius, in his Memoir of Nero (Ner. xvi.) asserts the same fact. Pliny, who was employed by Trajan to prosecute the Christians, in his celebrated letter to that emperor, (Epist. x. 97.) states, that "many of both sexes, and of every age and rank, were infected with this *superstition* (as he thinks fit to term it); and that it had penetrated the villages, as well as the cities." Marcus Antoninus, who wrote a few years after Pliny, mentions the Christians as "examples of a resolute and obstinate contempt of death;" and it is generally supposed that they were the Galileans recorded by Epictetus, as "taught by practice to despise the rage of their armed enemies." (Ner. iv. 7.) It is incontrovertible, therefore, that there were vast numbers of Christians, soon after Jesus of Nazareth is said to have appeared upon earth, who chose to endure the greatest extremities rather than abandon the religion which he had inculcated.

* Acts xxi. 20.

† Col. iv. 16.

‡ Rev. ii. and iii.

§ Titus i. 5.

thynia,* and many other places, to whom the epistles were written, and who, despite of all pains and persecutions, embraced the gospel as a faithful saying, and as well worthy of all acceptance.† The venerable Dr. Doddridge, in his “Evidences of Christianity,” observes, “that the Gospel met with so favourable a reception in the world, as evidently proved that its first publishers were capable of producing such evidence of its truth, as an imposture could not admit.” He then goes on to state, “that, considering the circumstances of the case, it is amazing that even truth itself, under so many disadvantages, should have so illustrious a triumph; and that its wonderful success does evidently argue such an extraordinary interposition of God in its favour, as may justly be called a miraculous attestation to it. There was not only one of a family, or two of a city taken, and brought to Zion,‡ but so did the Lord hasten it, in its appointed time, that a little one became a thousand, and a small one a strong nation.”§ And as the Apostles themselves were honoured with very remarkable success, their followers increased so much

* 1 Peter i. 1.

† 1 Tim. i. 15.

‡ Jeremiah iii. 14.

§ Isaiah lx. 22.

in the next age, that Pliny testifies “ he found the heathen temples in Achaia almost deserted;”^{*} and Tertullian afterwards boasts, “ that all places but those temples, were filled with Christians; so that were they only to withdraw, cities and provinces would be depopulated.”[†] Nor did the Gospel only triumph thus within the boundaries of the Roman empire; for long before Tertullian was born, Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, which seems to have been written not much above a hundred years after Christ’s death, declares that there was no nation of men, whether Greeks or barbarians, not excepting those savages that wandered in clans from one region to another, and had no fixed habitation, who had not learned to offer prayers and thanksgivings to the Father and Maker of all, in the name of Jesus who was crucified;[‡] and this amid all the extraordinary persecution which prevailed from the very infancy of Christianity!

As to their divine Master, the Apostles scruple not to own, that his country was infamous, —

^{*} See Pliny’s Letters. Letter X. p. 97.

[†] Tertullian’s Apology, chap. xxxvii.

[‡] Vide Justin Martyr’s Apology, p. 388, in Thirlbuis’ Edition.

“ Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ? Philip said unto him, Come and see.”* That his birth and education were mean, “ And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”† “ And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works ? Is not this the carpenter’s son ? Is not his mother called Mary ? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas ? And his sisters, are they not all with

* John i. 45, 46. and vii. 52. Nathanael, though a Galilean, had so bad an opinion of Nazareth, that he could not think it likely so great a blessing, or indeed, “ any good thing,” could arise from that wicked place. This opinion as to the general character of the Nazarenes, seems to have been well founded ; but it was going too far, to suppose that “ no good thing ” could thence arise. Philip, however, very prudently entreated him to go with him, and judge for himself ; and Nathanael being a candid, pious man, readily complied.

† Luke ii. 7.

us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him.”* That his life was indigent, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.”† They further acknowledge, that he was most disdainfully rejected by the rulers, “Have any of the rulers: or of the Pharisees, believed on him?”‡ “But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”§ That he was even accused of Sabbath breaking: “The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath-day.”|| “Therefore, said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day.”** Accused of blasphemy: “And behold

* Matt. xiii. 54,—57, and Mark vi. 3.

† Matt. viii. 20, and Luke viii. 3.

‡ John vii. 48.

§ 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8.

|| John v. 15, 16.

** John ix. 16.

certain of the Scribes said within themselves, 'This man blasphemeth.'* "Then the High Priest rent his clothes, saying, he hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold now ye have heard his blasphemy."† And accused of sedition: "And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himself is Christ a king."‡ Moreover, that he was reviled by the populace, as a debauchee: "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."§ As a lunatic: "And many of them said he hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?"|| And, as a demoniac: "The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil, who goeth about to kill thee."** "Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"†† And, finally, that by the united rage of both rulers and people, he was publicly executed as the vilest of malefactors, with all imaginable

* Matt. ix. 3.

† Matt. xxvi. 65, and John x. 31—36.

‡ Luke xxiii. 2, and John xix. 12.

§ Matt. xi. 19. Luke vii. 34.

|| John x. 20.

** John vii. 20.

†† John viii. 48.

circumstances of ignominy, scorn, and abhorrence ;* nor do they scruple to own, that terror and distress of spirit into which he was thrown by his sufferings, which induced him to say to Peter and the other disciples who accompanied him, “ My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.”† And to pray, saying, “ Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me,” when there appeared an angel from heaven strengthening him in his agony ; and when his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground.‡ But above all, the agony he endured during his crucifixion, when he cried with a loud voice, “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”§

It is not my intention to enter into any detail regarding the history and ministry of our blessed Redeemer. Much labour has been bestowed in this way, from the days of Tatian, in the second century, to our own times ; but it must be admitted, after all the trials that have been made, that the inspired

* Matt. xxvii. 32—44. The Jews, in some of their earliest subsequent writings, call Jesus “ the man who was hanged ;” and the heathen, Lucian, rallies the Christians for having deserted the pompous train of the Pagan deities to worship One, whom he impiously derides as “ a crucified impostor.”

† Matt. xxvi. 38.

‡ Luke xxii. 41—44. § Matt. xxvii. 46.

writers did not furnish adequate materials for completing a regular history of Jesus Christ : the facts which they recorded were only few, when compared with those which they omitted. Saint John says, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."* Besides this, they left no sure indication regarding the precise dates of the facts which they mentioned,—their true order cannot be ascertained with any certainty,—there are many large chasms in their narratives which cannot now be filled up,—and the number of years through which the personal ministry of our Lord extended has even been left disputable. What undertaking, then, could be more hopeless than the business of arranging such scanty memorials in the form of a complete and consistent history ? Since the avowed design of these sacred authors, was merely to record a few select and striking passages from the life of Jesus, for the purpose of proving that he was the great Messiah who had been promised to the fathers ; we are to

* John xxi. 25. Consult also Matt. iv. 23, 24 ; ix. 35 ; xiv. 35, 36 ; xv. 30, 31 ; xix. 1, 2 ; xxi. 14. Luke vii. 21, 22.

look for no accurate arrangement of matter in them—no enticing words of human wisdom—no scientific remarks—and no minute details, calculated to gratify natural curiosity; but a plain exhibition of such important facts, doctrines, and precepts, as, when connected with the rest of the Scriptures, is sufficient to render those who receive them wise unto salvation, and heirs of everlasting life! For Saint John again, hath said, “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name.”* For, “whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have eternal life.”†

I shall not therefore dwell on the history of our Redeemer—on the various important facts related of him in the four gospels. That after having been foretold by many prophets, in distant periods of time he was at length, agreeably to the repeated declaration of an angel,—first to a priest ministering at the golden altar in the temple; and then to

* John xx. 30, 31, and Luke i. 1—4.

† John iii. 15, 36; i. 4; v. 26; xvii. 3. 1 John v. 11. Heb. vii. 25.

his mother, conceived by a virgin of David's family, that his birth was proclaimed by a choir of angels, who celebrated it in celestial anthems, as the foundation of peace on earth, and the most glorious display of divine benevolence to men :—that before his public appearance, a person greater than any of the prophets, and whose birth had also been foretold by an angel, was sent to prepare his way. Neither shall I dwell on the intimations which are contained in these sacred books regarding the DIVINE NATURE of the Messiah, in which he existed along with God the Father before his appearance in the flesh,* — on HIS MIRACULOUS CONCEPTION, JOY-

* The passages of the first three Gospels which relate to this most important subject are comparatively few, and rather obscure ; but in the Gospel of John, which was written probably above thirty years later than any of them, it is frequently introduced in a clear and direct manner, by the testimony of the sacred historian, of John the Baptist, various other disciples, the Lord Jesus himself, and God the Father, who, on various occasions, honoured him as his only begotten Son. And as the subject appears to me to be so important, I would have my reader carefully to compare Matt. i. 23 ; iii. 11, 12, xvi. 15—18, 27 ; xvi. 1—5 ; xviii. 20 ; xxv. 31, 32 ; xxviii. 19, 20. Mark i. 1, 7—11 ; xvi. 19, 20. Luke i. 32, 35, 76, John i. 1—4, 10, 14—18, 30—34, 48 ; ii. 24, 25 ; iii. 13, 16. 31—36 ; v. 17—29, vi. 38—40, 46—58 ; viii. 23—58 ; x. 30—39 ; xi. 25—27, xiv. 6—12 ; xvi. 15, 27—30 ; xvii. 5, 8, 24 ; xx. 28.

FUL BIRTH, AND EARLY CIRCUMSTANCES, with his LINEAGE according to the flesh, as given by Matthew and Luke from the ancient patriarchs, in the line of David,—on HIS BAPTISM, when he was anointed with a wonderful effusion of the Spirit,

In defence of this cardinal doctrine, much has been written by men of great eminence and talent; and no one who will take the trouble to study their works, need remain ignorant of the solid foundation of scripture and reason on which it stands. At the same time, there are many who have it not in their power to devote themselves to the study of the larger works upon this subject, and to whom, accordingly, a brief, clear, and comprehensive view of the scriptural evidence in favour of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, would be of great importance. To such I would particularly recommend the *Treatise* of Dr. Wynpersse, (which is translated from the Dutch by W. L. Alexander, M. A.) persuaded that they will derive from the perusal of it, high satisfaction and benefit. They will find it simple, perspicuous, and scriptural; and pervaded with a fine tone of piety and judicious zeal. It is the produce of no hasty nor intemperate effort, but the fruit of long meditation and patient research. The author unites most beautifully the dignity of truth, with the earnestness of persuasion; and preserves throughout, the character of one whose own faith is firmly established, and who is solicitous to bring others into the same condition. And oh! let my reader remember, that the author is contending about the character and person of no ordinary or indifferent being; but for the grand leading doctrine of the Christian Religion — for the supreme Divinity of One, before whose bar we must all stand to be judged of the deeds done in the body.

poured down upon him by a visible symbol ; the efficacy of which, continually residing in him, was apparent throughout the whole course of his ministry ;—on the HEAVENLY DOCTRINE which he taught, particularly respecting his own person and office, —his great salvation, and way to obtain an interest in it,—the peculiar nature of his kingdom, and its gradual progress towards perfection,—the intended mission of the Holy Spirit as an abiding Comforter, with his beneficial influence on the hearts of his disciples,—the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment of the world, with the eternal state of retribution on which the righteous and the wicked shall then enter. On the MIRACLES which he performed to attract the attention of the Jews, and confirm his testimony : the inimitable nature of those miracles, which rendered them incapable of being counterfeited by all the discoveries of science and art, — their surprising magnitude, which extended to many different creatures and substances, —the numerous distinct kinds of them, which had no limit,—the manner in which they were performed, merely by his word of divine power, and in some cases when the objects of it were at a distance,—his uniform success in perfectly accomplishing all that he attempted, without a single failure,—the

beneficial and benevolent quality of his mighty works, which were all worthy of the exalted character that he sustained,—the frequent repetition of them in the presence of multitudes of vigilant observers, many of whom were his avowed enemies, —with the voluntary acknowledgments of their unquestionable reality by the most competent judges, and the abiding impression that they made on thousands of credible witnesses.* Nor shall I

* In a passage, extant in every copy that remains of Josephus's History of the Jews, we have an explicit testimony to the substance of our Saviour's history, in these words:—"At that time lived Jesus, a wise man, if he may be called a man, for he performed many wonderful works. He was a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many Jews and Gentiles. This was the Christ: and when Pilate at the instigation of the chief men among us, had condemned him to the cross, they who before had conceived an affection for him, did not cease to adhere to him; for, on the third day he appeared to them alive again, the divine prophets having foretold these and many wonderful things concerning him. And the sect of the Christians, so called from him, subsists to this time." (*Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. iii. sect. 3.*) Quadratus has left us the following testimony.—

"The works of our Saviour were always conspicuous, for they were real; both those that were healed, and those that were raised from the dead; who were seen, not only when they were healed or raised, but for a long time afterwards; not only whilst he dwelled on this earth, but also after his departure, and for a good while after it, insomuch that some of them

stay to expatiate on the striking PARABLES by which Jesus illustrated his message, and urged it home on the hearts of his hearers.* The strict OBEDIENCE WHICH HE REQUIRED, and the MOTIVES with which his commands were enforced; inculcating subjection to the whole law of Moses, (which continued in full force during the period of his ministry,) and adding many precepts, with which the Jews had not been acquainted. The PREDICTIONS which he delivered, when he foretold his personal sufferings, death, and subsequent exaltation, — the punishment of his enemies, the destruction of Jerusalem, the calling of the Gentiles, the ultimate establishment of his kingdom, and the lasting felicity of his faithful disciples.†

have reached to our times." (Ap. Euseb. H. E. lib. 4. cap. 2.) It were easy to quote a thousand other testimonies from ancient authors. It *has* been done, and is here unnecessary. I refer my reader to Paley's Evidences of Christianity.

* Many of the Jews were too thoughtless, and too much under the influence of the grossest prejudices, for receiving his spiritual doctrines and precepts in their natural simplicity; therefore, in much condescension to their weakness, he frequently clothed the truth with some beautiful similitude; and forty-eight of these have been recorded in the Gospels.

† The exact accomplishment of our Saviour's predictions concerning himself was fully recorded by his Apostles. The Jews who rejected him were signally punished; and their capital, with its temple, completely destroyed by the Romans

The COMPLETE OBEDIENCE that he yielded to the whole law ; leaving a perfect example of steadfast confidence, unspeakable love, fervent devotion, and filial submission toward his Father ; compassion, faithfulness, meekness, patience, and forgiveness toward his enemies ; with condescension, tenderness, and constant affection towards his sincere disciples.* The peculiar commission, instructions,

about forty years after his resurrection, as we are minutely informed by Josephus, their own authentic historian. The subsequent history of the Church shows how others of his prophecies have been verified, and those of them which still remain to be fulfilled, may be compared with similar passages in both the sacred volumes.

* In short, never was a character (as Archbishop Newcome observes,) at the same time so commanding and natural, so resplendent and pleasing, so amiable and venerable, as that of Christ. There is a peculiar contrast in it between an awful dignity and majesty, and the most engaging loveliness, tenderness and softness. He now converses with prophets, law-givers, and angels ; and the next instant, he meekly endures the dulness of his disciples, and the blasphemies and rage of the multitude. He now calls himself *greater than Solomon*, one who can command *legions of angels*, the giver of life to *whomsoever he will*, the Son of God, who shall sit on his glorious throne to judge the world ; at other times we see him embracing *young children*, not *lifting up his voice in the streets*, not *breaking the bruised reed nor quenching the smoking flax* ; calling his disciples *not servants, but friends and brethren*, and comforting them with an exuberant and parental affection. Let us pause

warnings, and encouragement that he gave the APOSTLES AND OTHER DISCIPLES, whom he called to attend him, and afterwards sent forth to preach in his name.

Neither shall I dwell on the HONOURS which he occasionally received during the time of his ministry; — on his TRIUMPHANT PROCESSION into Jerusalem, with the important events which preceded his last Passover; but, passing over all these, I shall come to the SUFFERINGS which the Saviour of the world endured for the redemption of guilty men. I shall call my reader's attention to those *dreadful* sufferings which took place chiefly in the garden of

an instant, and fill our minds with the idea of One who knew all things, heavenly and earthly, searched and laid open the inmost recesses of the heart, rectified every prejudice, and removed every mistake of a moral and religious kind; by a word exercised sovereignty over all nature, penetrated the hidden events of futurity, gave promises of admission into a happy immortality, had the keys of life and death, claimed an union with the Father; and yet was pious, mild, gentle, humble, affable, social, benevolent, friendly, affectionate. Such a character is fairer than the morning-star. Each separate virtue is made stronger by opposition and contrast; and the union of so many virtues forms a brightness which fitly represents the glory of that God who is invisible, "who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see."

. Gethsemane *—in the palace of the High Priest, before Herod and Pontius Pilate, where he was scourged, mocked, and condemned—and on Mount Calvary, where the Lord of life and glory was crucified between two malefactors !

Come, then, my Christian reader, let us now enter upon the affecting and interesting narrative and contemplate THE LAST EVENING which the meek and lowly Jesus passed among his sorrowing disciples ; when he washed their feet, observed the Passover along with them, forewarned them of approaching temptation, discovered the traitor who had agreed to betray him, instituted the standing memorial of his death after the departure of Judas, gave all his faithful friends a new commandment, comforted them with seasonable promises, and offered up a comprehensive intercessory prayer to his Father.

* GROTIUS tells us that the word *Gethsemane* in Hebrew signifies an *oil-press*, for as the mount had its name from the quantity of olive-trees that grew upon it, it is probable that this garden, which was at the foot of it, had a press in it, and this not only reconciles the Evangelists, two of whom mention only the mount, another the garden, and the fourth, Gethsemane, but likewise carries our ideas backward to the circumstance mentioned, Is. lxiii. 3, which receives new light from this passage.

“ * Nothing can be more simple, and to an awakened heart, to one who has been taught to love God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, nothing can be more affecting, than the Gospel narrative of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Hear it, then, in the plain, yet beautiful language of holy writ, and may all our hearts be warmed and elevated by the views it affords us of the wisdom and loving-kindness, the consideration and tender compassion of our great High Priest, who first appointed it! ‘ And when the even was come,’ say the Evangelists, † ‘ Jesus sat down, and the twelve Apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired’ (or, I have most heartily desired) to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.’ This, then, was the last Passover of which the Lord Jesus Christ was to be a partaker;

* The above beautiful passage I extract from the “ Discourses upon the Doctrinal Articles of the Church of England,” by the Rev. Henry Blunt, A. M. Chaplain to the Duke of Richmond; an admirable and interesting work, uniting the most simple explanatory statements with the most direct appeals to the conscience and the heart.

† Matt. xxvi. 20. Luke xxii. 14.

it was more than this; it was the last Passover which God would recognise in his church: it was the final rite of the old dispensation, the death-song of Judaism. All that the passover had ever typified, was that night to be realised; the true Paschal Lamb was to be delivered to the slaughterers; 'the blood of sprinkling,' which should, throughout all ages, secure the people of God, by a spiritual deliverance far more wonderful and far more blessed, than the temporal deliverance of the first-born in Egypt, was on that coming morn to be poured forth; when he, the Lamb of God, the great propitiation, should close the series of fourteen hundred passovers, by the sacrifice of himself. Our Lord then, 'heartily desired' to partake, for the last time, of this solemn rite with his beloved Apostles; he 'heartily desired' that the shadow should pass away, and the great and glorious reality, which should bring pardon and peace to a ruined world, should be consummated: yes, strange as it may seem, 'he heartily desired' that coming meal, although a more sorrowful one he had never been partaker of, or one more calculated to arm with tenfold anguish the sufferings that awaited him.

“ And now his desire had been fulfilled, that evening meal had been over, the final Passover was concluded, and the Lord of life, and his disciples, still lingered in the supper-room, delighting in that spiritual converse which made their hearts burn within them, and presented to them no feeble foretaste of the communion of the saints in bliss. The bread and wine, always accompaniments of the Jewish Passover, still remained upon the table; when Jesus, no doubt during some solemn pause in the conversation, when all minds were filled with the thought of those approaching sorrows, of which our Lord had on that evening for the first time plainly spoken, took up the bread, and breaking it, and pouring forth his blessing upon it, delivered it to his disciples, with these few but emphatic words, ‘ Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.’ Likewise also he “ took the cup,” and blessing that in like manner, ‘ he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.’ And he said unto them, ‘ This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you,’* and ‘ for many, for the remission of sins.† Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more henceforth of this fruit of the vine,

* Luke xxii. 20.

† Matt. xxvi. 28.

until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

“ How simple, how touchingly beautiful is the whole of this Gospel narrative ! Our Lord well knew, not only the corruption, but the coldness and ingratitude of the human heart. He knew that years, nay centuries, must pass away, and that the history of his dying love should fall upon men's ears, and on men's hearts, like a tale of other times, in which they were little interested ; while even to the few, the happy few, who should in all ages adore and venerate that Saviour's name, there would be still the strong temptation to suffer their hearts to dwell upon ‘ the things which are seen and are temporal,’ to the frequent forgetfulness of those, which ‘ are not seen and are eternal.’ To meet, then, this never-ceasing, never-slumbering tendency of our corrupt and fallen nature, was no doubt the primary intention of the striking incident we are considering. ‘ This do in remembrance of me.’ And mark how small a thing it was that the Saviour of the world requested of his followers ; as though he had said, When in times to come, you assemble together in my name and in my worship, I ask of you no great, no costly sacrifice ; I only ask to live in your memory, and in

your love; I only desire to see, and let an unbelieving world see, that in every generation, throughout all time, there shall still be some who will remember the transactions of this awful night, who will adore and love the despised Saviour, and acknowledge him in this, the lowest point of his humiliation, as their Redeemer and their God. Add, then, this little act, this slight memorial of all the sorrow and the anguish you will this night witness, of all the agonies of that scene, from which to-morrow's sun will hide his face, add only this slight memorial from time to time, to your accustomed sacrifice of prayer and praise; eat one piece of broken bread, and drink one drop of wine, in the name of the Crucified. 'Do this in remembrance of me' at those your solemn festivals, from this my hour of suffering, until I come again in peace and receive you unto myself.

"Who could resist such an appeal? who disobey such a command?—neglect so easy, so merciful a request? It were impossible. More than eighteen centuries have passed away, since, in that upper chamber, in some obscure house in the city of Jerusalem, the words which conveyed the request were spoken by that lowly Sufferer to his heart-broken followers; and is it too much to say, that 'their sound

has gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world?" From that night to the present hour, all ranks, all classes of Christian believers, have united in fulfilling this last request of their Redeemer. Kings have descended from their thrones, and laid aside their crowns, and for a time forgotten all their earthly pageantry, and knelt in reverence to the King of Kings, and been partakers of his humble feast. High and low, rich and poor, all who name the name of Christ, have remembered and rejoiced to remember, his dying love, by accepting this, his dying invitation. Century after century has passed away, the monuments of human greatness have mouldered into dust, the laws inscribed upon tablets of brass have perished, dynasties and empires have risen and fallen, and are forgotten, and these few simple sentences—this short, affecting memorial, has outlived them all—never obliterated, never even suspended; no single week, we might perhaps with perfect truth assert, no single day, has ever yet passed by, which did not witness some little assemblage of the followers of the Redeemer 'doing this in remembrance of Him;' and thus, as the Apostle says, 'showing forth the Lord's death until he come.' "

After our Lord and the disciples had sung a

hymn of praise,* according to the custom at the conclusion of the paschal supper, (which some think consisted of psalms, from the hundred and thirteenth to the hundred and eighteenth inclusive) he proceeded with the eleven to the Mount of Olives (for Judas had previously left them †). Knowing that the time of his being betrayed was just approaching, he would not stay to be apprehended in the house, lest he should bring the master of it into trouble; nor in Jerusalem, lest it should occasion public tumults and outrages; but he retired with his disciples to the Mount of Olives.

At this time he solemnly assured them that during that very night they would all meet with such temptations, as would stagger their faith in him, and cause them to fall into sin through fear of men; for the prophecy was about to be fulfilled, in which the Lord had declared, that he would “smite the shepherd and the sheep should be scattered.”† Shortly after this, Jesus came down from the Mount of Olives, and, along with his disciples, crossed the brook Cedron,§ which ran through the

* Matt. xxvi. 30.

† John xiii. 30.

‡ Zech. xiii. 7.

~ / § Cedron, or Kidron, was a small brook to the east of Jerusalem, over which David (the type of Jesus) passed weeping,

valley and entered the garden of Gethsemane. This seems to have been a pleasant and fruitful place, to which Jesus frequently resorted with his disciples, for retirement, devout conversation, and religious exercises. When he came thither, he left the other apostles at a distance, and took with him those only as witnesses of his agony, who had before witnessed his transfiguration.* In their presence he endured the most painful anguish of soul and depression of spirits. The sufferings he was about to undergo were so great, and the prospect of them seemed so terrifying, that he exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death :† tarry ye here, and watch with me."

when he fled from Absalom (see 2 Sam. xv. 23.) It derived its name from a shady and gloomy valley, through which it ran. The first Adam fell in a garden, the second Adam began the last scene of his atoning sufferings in a garden likewise.

* Matt. xvii. 1, 2.

† Matt. xxvi. 38. "Signifying, that his soul, with all the faculties and powers of it, was sad on every side; and, as it were, beset and besieged with grief, sorrow went round about him." *Leigh*.—"The words used are the most expressive imaginable, and denote the greatest dejection, amazement, anguish, and horror of mind, which can be conceived; the state of one surrounded with sorrows, overwhelmed with miseries, and almost swallowed up with consternation." *Scott*.

Then withdrawing himself from them “about a stone’s cast, he kneeled down and prayed,* saying, “Oh! my Father! if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”† At this moment Satan was marching towards him with his principalities and powers to attack him; Judas, one of his disciples, was at hand to betray him; a multitude with swords and staves were about to seize him; the sins and chastisements of his people were just going to be laid upon him; the sword of justice was brandished against him, and ready to give the blow; the hour of death was near, and he was brought to the dust of it—“thou hast brought me into the dust of death”—and there is “none to help me”—none among his disciples; one of them is about to betray him—another to deny him—all to forsake and flee from him; nor any among the angels of heaven; for though they ministered to him in the wilderness, and strengthened him at this time, there were none near him on the cross; that it might be manifest that salvation was wrought out alone by him, as Isaiah saith; “I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to

* Luke xxii. 41.

† Matt. xxvi. 38.

uphold : therefore mine own arm wrought salvation.”* These, and a multitude of other agonizing distresses, unknown and inconceivable to us, which might necessarily spring from so vast, so momentous, so stupendous a work, as the salvation of a whole world, made a plain distinction between our Saviour’s situation, and that of any other martyr to the cause of truth ; and most clearly proves that there never was a sorrow in every respect like unto his sorrow.

.After having returned to his disciples and found them asleep †—after having told them to watch and pray that they might not enter into temptation, he went away the second time, and prayed, saying, “ Oh ! my Father ! if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.”—“ And when he returned he found them asleep again : for their eyes were heavy : neither wist they what to answer him.” “ And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time.” “ And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly :

* Isaiah lxiii. 5 ; lix. 16.

† It was then very late at night, for after supper Christ had made a long discourse ; besides, they were oppressed and stupefied with sorrow, which might have exhausted nature much more than the want of sleep.—I. ENFANT.

And his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”* Although at this time “there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him,”†—the agonizing conflicts and terrors of his mind were so amazingly distressing, that notwithstanding the coldness of the night, and his lying on the ground, his blood and animal spirits were thrown into such violent excitation, as opened the pores of his body in an extraordinary manner, and forced their way through them in a bloody sweat, which, being thickened by the cold, fell down in clots upon the earth. ‡

* See Matt. chapter xxvi. Mark xiv. Luke xxii. John xii. 27.

† Luke xxii. 43. This was doubtless a part of our Saviour’s humiliation, and an instance of his condescension, that he was pleased to be thus “strengthened” by a “ministering spirit,” though all the angels of God worship him.

‡ Doubtless this agony was an extreme horror, conflict, confusion, amazement and astonishment of mind, arising from a bitter sense of God’s wrath let forth upon him, as bearing the sins of his people. Grappling with the powers of darkness, and feeling vehement distress of soul, he prayed with increased intensity of feeling, till—dreadful to relate! “his sweat was as it were *great drops of blood falling down to the ground!*”

He, moreover, appears to have had foretastes of his passion, and laboured for utterance:—“Now is my soul troubled; and, what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for

And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he still found them sleeping for sorrow : and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest : it is enough, the hour is come ; behold the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going : behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. And while he yet spake, came the wretched Judas to betray his Lord, “ and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.” These seem to have been part of the Roman soldiers who were kept at Jerusalem as a guard for the temple, and to prevent disturbances during the public solemnities. The Jewish council made application to the Roman governor to have their assistance in apprehending Jesus as a raiser of sedition ; and this made it necessary for Judas to point out Jesus to them by some sign, that they might distinguish him from his disciples and followers. It is, moreover, probable that our Lord had been accustomed to welcome the disciples, in the most condescending and affectionate manner, by allowing them to kiss him, when they returned from any

• this cause came I unto this hour.” (John xii. 27.) His sufferings seem to have passed through his mind in one moment, but *human language could not express them !*

service ; and Judas basely took advantage of this, and agreed by this token to mark him out to the officers, exhorting them to seize and hold him fast.* Accordingly, he came up with the utmost effrontery, and with an address expressive of the highest respect and affection, he “kissed him;” but Jesus, with a meek rebuke of his complicated hypocrisy, treachery, and ingratitude, calling him “friend,” (or *companion*,) as an aggravation of his guilt, demanded why he was present on this occasion, or why he came thus attended :† “Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?”‡ Dost thou make my condescending kindness the occasion of thy base treachery, and persist in the tokens of respect and affection even in the very deed ?

Our Lord, then, though fully aware of all the inexpressible sufferings which were coming upon him, and every circumstance of them, went forth to meet his rude assailants, with the most perfect serenity and fortitude ; for, “knowing all things that should come upon him, he went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye ? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth ; Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I

* Matt. xxvi. 48. † Matt. xxvi. 50. ‡ Luke xxii. 48.

am he, they went backward and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? and they said, Jesus of Nazareth; Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way."* Here Doddridge has observed, that "the critics are in raptures at the gallantry of Achilles, in going to the Trojan war, when he knew, according to Homer, that he should fall there. But he must have a very superficial way of thinking, who does not see infinitely more fortitude in our Lord's conduct on this occasion." Judas, standing with the company when Jesus declared himself to be the person whom they sought, was also constrained to go backward, and fall to the ground:† yet he was not dismayed by that further display of the power of his Lord, but dared to proceed with his horrid purpose! No doubt Jesus could with equal ease have struck the whole company dead in a moment; and it is wonderful that the Scribes, Priests, and other Jews, did not recollect the companies which were destroyed by fire from heaven when they came to take Elijah;‡ and that they should venture to renew their attempt after this unexpected repulse.• Our Lord, however, was pleased not to proceed any further against

* John xviii. 4—8. † Psalm xxvii. 2. ‡ 2 Kings i. 9—14.

them; but only observed, that as they sought him, who was ready to yield up himself, they should let his disciples go away unmolested; and with this they were influenced to comply. This conduct of Jesus accorded to the word which he had before spoken, when he said, "And now I am no more in the world; but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled."* He thus not only showed the most tender concern for their *temporal* safety, as given to him to be his apostles: but he kept them, as true but weak believers, from those temptations which they were not then prepared to withstand; and this conduced also to their *spiritual* preservation.

The officers then approached and apprehended him: and Peter, recollecting his promise,† and purposing to show his readiness to fight in his Master's cause, drew a sword, and without wait-

* John xvii. 11, 12.

† Matt. xxvi. 33. 35.

ing for orders, aimed a blow at the head of Malchus, the High Priest's servant,* and cut off his ear. But our Lord ordered Peter to put up his sword again, as "all they that took the sword would perish with the sword." Peter's rash courage seemed to render a miracle necessary for his preservation, and that of the other disciples; but without a previous knowledge of our Lord's character, we could not have expected such a miracle as he wrought on this occasion. Desiring his furious adversaries to "suffer thus far," he immediately and perfectly restored the ear of Malchus. Yet neither this evidence of his power, nor his kindness to so officious an adversary, had any effect in softening them, or withdrawing them from their purpose. It must have been the effect of a secret divine interposition, that the officers and soldiers permitted the disciples to withdraw quietly after this violent resistance. The question proposed by our Lord, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"† was peculiarly beautiful and expressive. He did not confine his thoughts to the malice and injustice of

* Probably this man was one of the rudest and most forward in the company.

† John xviii. 11.

his enemies in his sufferings ; but he received them as a cup put into his hand by his heavenly Father, who would not afflict him without good reason, and for the most gracious and important purposes. He further added, that he did not want their feeble help : for if he chose to decline his sufferings, he could speedily obtain from his Father even “ more than twelve legions of angels,”* that is, more angels than there were legionary soldiers in the largest Roman armies, or more than seventy thousand angels, to fight for him.† But, in this case, he inquired, how the Scriptures could be accomplished, which predicted that the Messiah must be cut off, and be numbered with transgressors ? Then, addressing those who came to apprehend him, he demanded, why they came out against him with such warlike preparations, as if he had been some desperate robber, at the head of a determined gang, who could not be seized without much danger and difficulty : ‡ whereas, he had daily appeared

* Matt. xxvi. 53.

† The idea will appear most grand and sublime to those who consider the execution made in the army of the proud Assyrian, by a single angel in one night's time. 2 Kings xix. 35.

‡ Judas, as has been shown, had procured a cohort of Roman soldiers, as well as the officers of the Jewish rulers, in order to take him : and they came with every preparation

among them, as a teacher, unarmed, and unattended except by a few fishermen, and had acted in the most peaceable manner. They had before indeed been secretly restrained from assaulting him : but now “ his time was come ; ” and all this was ordered and performed, that the Scriptures might be exactly accomplished. When, therefore, the disciples perceived, that he intended quietly to yield himself up to the officers, their courage and resolution at once entirely failed, and they all “ forsook him and fled ” to save themselves !

“ Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him ; and led him away to Annas first ; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the High Priest that same year.”* The grand council of the Jews was convened at the High Priest’s palace, at that late hour, waiting to have Jesus brought before them ; and thither the officers conducted him bound as a cri-

which would have been necessary if they had attempted to apprehend some desperate criminal, attended with numerous armed followers who would use every method to oppose or escape them : otherwise lanterns and torches seem not to have been needful, when the moon was at the full.

* John xviii. 13. Annas was dismissed from being High Priest, A. D. 23, after filling that office fifteen years ; but being a person of high character, and having had five sons

minal. Peter, likewise, followed at some distance, to see how matters would terminate: and, having obtained admission into the High Priest's palace, he associated with the servants as a stranger drawn thither from curiosity. This was another false step tending to his fall. By striking the High Priest's servant, he had rendered himself obnoxious, and afraid of being detected; and seeing he had not courage openly to attend Jesus as his disciple, he ought by no means to have gone at all: for thus he thrust himself into the midst of enemies, and was forced silently to hear all their scoffs, insults, menaces, and blasphemies; and so "he entered into temptation,"* and denied his Lord.

"Now Caiaphas was he who gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people."† And his reasoning is evidently that of a politician, who prefers what is

successively high priests, and Caiaphas being his son-in-law, he must, no doubt, have possessed very great authority. Of Christ being sent to Annas, however, the other Evangelists say nothing; because nothing was done to him there; but all was performed in the palace of the High Priest.

* Our Lord had said to Peter, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matt. xxvi. 40, 41.

† John xviii. 14.

useful to what is just and honourable. As the Spirit of God had, in former times, uttered predictions by the High Priest, so, now Caiaphas was directed to use words, which, in a sense very different from what he understood them, intimated the true consequences of Christ's death; the salvation, not only of the nation, but of the world in general.

The High Priest then asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort: and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me; what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said."* This reply was peculiarly suitable to the situation in which Jesus was at this time placed; for he stood as a prisoner on his trial, before judges who were determined to put him to death, and only sought a pretence for their injustice and murder. It is most likely also, that some were then present, who had frequently heard his instructions. An officer, however, of the court, imagining on false grounds that he answered the High Priest in a disrespectful manner, contumeliously smote him with

* John xviii. 19—21.

the palm of his hand, or rather with a rod, or wand of office.* But Jesus meekly replied, by observing, that if on that, or on any other occasion, he had spoken any thing criminal, let him bear witness against him ; but if he had answered well, and his words were not faulty, why did he smite him, when he was on his trial in a court, where justice ought to be administered to every one ? It was proper, that this man should be rebuked for his ill-behaviour, and that the imputation of blame should be done away from our Lord's character ; though he was ready to endure every indignity and cruelty, without resistance or menace.

“Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council,† sought false witness against Jesus to put him to death.”† And although, on examining the witnesses, they formed their questions so as to extort from them something which might be construed as a proof of his guilt, and authorize his condemnation to death, yet none were sufficient, or ap-

* Micah v. 1.

† All the Sanhedrim, or great council ; namely, chief priests, or heads of families, elders or judges, and scribes or doctors of the law ; having the high priest for their president : these were the supreme authority both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs.

‡ Matt. xxvi. 59.

proximated the point they desired. At length, "came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days."* But this evidence was given of their own accord, and was notoriously false; for Jesus never had said that he would destroy and rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, as they affirmed. At the first passover, indeed, after he had driven the traders out of the temple, the Jews insisted upon his showing by what authority he took upon him to make that reformation; and, in answer, he referred them to the miracle of his resurrection. "Destroy," said he, "this temple," pointing probably to his body, "and I will raise it up in three days."† The witnesses, therefore, through ignorance, but more probably through malice, perverted his words into an affirmation that he would destroy and rebuild the temple. Now, among the Jews it was reckoned an atrocious, and indeed a capital crime, for any one to speak disrespectfully, or even to prophesy against the temple: this was the charge which had been brought against the prophet Jeremiah, and it was likewise that on which the Jews grounded their accusation against Stephen.

* Matt. xxvi. 60, 61.

† See John, chapter ii.

These witnesses are justly branded throughout the world with the name of *false witnesses*,* and their testimony was deservedly disregarded by our Lord,† especially as they had been guilty of the greatest malice in giving it. When the High Priest found that Jesus took little notice of the things which the witnesses had given in evidence against him, he fell into a passion, supposing that he intended to put an affront upon the council, for he *arose* from his seat, which judges seldom do, unless when in some perturbation.

At length the High Priest solemnly “adjured him by the living God,” to declare whether “he was the Christ, the Son of God,” or not. This was the customary method of putting men upon their oath, to which the criminals or witnesses were required to answer, as in the presence of God. When the matter therefore was thus proposed, our Lord saw good to answer, that indeed Caiaphas had declared the real truth; and that notwithstanding his present despised condition, they would see him, as “the Son of Man, sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” “Then the High Priest rent his clothes,‡ saying, he hath

* Macknight.

† Matt. xxvi. 63.

‡ This avowal was evidently the very thing which the

spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.* The council either then retired for a little while, or ordered Jesus to withdraw, till they might consider what further steps to take with him; and then their officers, who had him in custody, and who were the ringleaders of all this insolence and barbarity, at the instigation of the priests, “did spit in his face,† and buffet him, and smote him with the palms of their hands,

High Priest wanted; and therefore he “rent his clothes,” as if in detestation of blasphemy; inquiring, what need had they to examine more witnesses, as they all had heard his “blasphemy?”

* Matt. xxvi. 65, 66. “By the Jewish law, blasphemy was denounced as a capital crime, cognizable by the civil magistrate; or rather, I should say, by the judicial council of the Jews — like any other offence against the rules and order of civilized society, Lev. xxiv. 16. See *Commentaries on the Law of Moses*, by Sir. J. D. Michaelis, translated by Dr. A. Smith, b. v. p. 251.

† This instance of contempt and reproach offered to Christ, was, at the same time, an expression of malice, and a compliance with custom. The practice has descended to later generations; for in the year 1744, when a rebel prisoner was brought before Nadir Shah’s general, the soldiers were ordered to spit in his face, an indignity of great antiquity in the East.” *Hanway’s Travels*, vol. i. p. 298.

saying, prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee ?”*

As the power of life and death was invested solely in the Romans, the Jews were not able to put Christ to death themselves ; therefore, according to their custom, they brought Jesus to the governor to have sentence passed upon him ; for, as Jerom observes, “ It was their custom to deliver up whomsoever they thought deserving death to the judge, having first bound him.” Accordingly, “ when the morning was come,” as the Apostle tells us,† “ all the chief priests and elders of the people, took counsel against Jesus to put him to death ”. “ And when they had bound him,‡ they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.”§

* Matt. xxvi. 67, 68.

† Matt. xxvii. 1, 2.

‡ Or, confined him more closely than before, as a *condemned malefactor* ; and to ensure success in that quarter, it was necessary to give their accusations against Jesus such a colour and shape, as should prevail upon the governor to put him to death. They had condemned him for blasphemy, but this they knew would have little weight with a Pagan, . . . who, like Gallio, would “ care for none of these things.” They therefore resolved to bring him before Pilate as a *state-prisoner*, and to charge him with treasonable and seditious practices.”

BISHOP PORTEUS.

§ Pontius Pilate governed Judea ten years under the Emperor Tiberius, A. D. 26 to 36.

At this time, Satan, who before had tempted the miserable Judas to betray his Lord, now urged him to despair : yet before his last fatal determination, perhaps hoping to obtain a reversal of Christ's condemnation, he went to the chief priests and elders, to return "the wages of his iniquity," and acknowledged in their presence, that "he had sinned," in that he had betrayed an innocent person into their hands, who was by that means likely to be put to death ; and he was now fully sensible, that his conduct had been peculiarly base and criminal. This was a most honourable testimony to Christ's character : but though this crime lay with intolerable weight on the conscience of Judas, and he confessed it to man, and dared not keep the infamous wages of his crime ; yet it does not appear that he was at all sensible of the guilt of his hypocrisy, covetousness, thefts, and all the other wickedness, committed during the whole course of his past life. The rulers, however, were too malignant and hardened, to be any ways affected by this interesting circumstance ; and they coldly declared, that the opinion and conduct of so base a wretch concerned not them ; let him look to that himself, for they were determined to put Jesus to death. Men who had any feeling—any

sentiments of common humanity, or even of common justice, would have now put an immediate stop to the proceedings; but this was far from entering into their plan; all they wanted, was the destruction of a man, whom they hated and feared; and whose life and doctrine was a standing reproach to them. And Judas "cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."*

Through the whole of the trial there appears an evident backwardness on the part of Pilate, even to meddle with the matter at all: he evidently desired to decline the necessity of deciding a cause, in which his judgment, and his apparent interest, were likely to interfere with each other. When therefore he learned that Jesus had lived in the district which Herod governed,* he immediately sent him and his accusers to that prince, who was then at Jerusalem, probably on account of the Passover; and Herod was greatly rejoiced to see Jesus, perhaps desiring to satisfy himself whether he were indeed "John the Baptist risen from the

* Matt. xxvii. 5. It admits of little doubt, that Judas's death preceded that of his injured Lord; so speedily did divine vengeance overtake him. Yet the rulers took no notice even of this alarming circumstance'

† Luke xxiii. 7.

dead," as he had once supposed;* he, moreover, "hoped to have seen some miracle done by him." But our Lord saw good, not only to disappoint that expectation, but also to keep a profound silence in his presence, not returning any answer either to his multiplied questions, or to the vehement accusations of his enemies. Yet Herod, though doubtless vexed and mortified, did not choose to have any hand in putting him to death; having probably been greatly terrified in his conscience on account of his murder of John the Baptist. He therefore contented himself with treating Jesus as a despicable person beneath his notice; except that he joined with his officers and guards in deriding and insulting him. In token of their contempt of his pretensions to be a king, they clothed him with some splendid garment, which had probably been worn by Herod; and he was sent back, thus attired, to Pilate, that he might*dispose of him as he pleased. Probably the Roman soldiers took the hint, from this insult of Herod and his guard, to clothe Jesus with a purple robe, and to put on him a crown of thorns. "And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves." We

* Matt. xiv. 1, 2.

need not wonder that they were jealous of each other, and that causes of enmity arose between them, when we consider that the one was a Roman, the other a proselyted Idumean, and both very wicked men, governing adjacent regions. The mutual respect, however, shown on this occasion, and their agreement with each other, in treating Jesus with a scornful disregard, brought about a reconciliation.*

“ Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner whom they would,”—a custom probably introduced by Augustus, and included in the commission of the procurator, as a means of procuring the favour of the people: and perhaps was intended to be agreeable to the nature of this festival, which was a commemoration of their deliverance out of Egypt. “ And

* This Herod was son to Herod the Great, under whom Christ was born, and uncle to Herod Agrippa, by whom James was beheaded and Peter imprisoned; who was eaten by worms; (Acts xii. 2, 3, 23.) and great-uncle to that Agrippa, who by Paul's discourse was “almost persuaded to be a Christian.” (Acts xxvi. 28.) Christ's arraignment before him, when he was sent back uncondemned, was a great additional proof of the falsehood of those accusations which the Jews had brought against him as a seditious person, and particularly as one who had stirred up the people in Galilee.—*Doddridge, as quoted by Scott.*

they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas ; therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you ? Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ ?" And thrice did he offer to dismiss him : but they would not hear him : to such a pitch were their passions raised by the craft of the priests*—so resolute, so obstinate were they to have him crucified, that, although the governor declared his innocence,† " they cried out the more, Crucify him,

* When Pilate renewed his proposal, he was surprised to find that Barabbas was unanimously preferred ; and that the multitude were clamorous in demanding the crucifixion of Jesus, whom they had but a short time before welcomed with loud hosannas, as the " Son of David" and " King of Israel," and called the " Messiah ;" and this when they could lay no crime to his charge ! On other occasions, the condemnation of any Jew, who was not a slave, to this ignominious and cruel death, would have hazarded an insurrection.

† There are two ways in which Pilate is said to have given testimony to the innocence of the life, and the reality of the death of Jesus Christ. First, by an express written to Tiberius, and by him presented to the senate ; and also by records written on tables, of all things of moment which occurred during his government. These proceedings were agreeable to a general custom, whereby all the governors of the provinces gave an account to the emperor of all such passages as were most remarkable. (Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 2.) With regard to the written records, it may be observed, that

crucify him." This remarkable unwillingness of Pilate to condemn Jesus, cannot be ascribed altogether to his regard for justice, for he was naturally cruel and vindictive, and had exercised many unwarrantable severities upon the Jews; but partly to his hatred and contempt of that nation, which made him pay little regard to their disputes and accusations; and partly, as appears afterwards, to his having been previously informed, as it now evidently appeared to him, that this prosecution was carried on, not on account of any offence against the laws of the Romans or Jews, but from enmity and hatred to Jesus.

While these things were in agitation, another circumstance occurred, which increased Pilate's

the ancient Romans constantly preserved the remembrance of all such remarkable things as happened in that city. This was done either in their *acta senatûs*, or *acta diurna populi*, which were diligently made and kept at Rome. In the same manner, the governors of the provinces took care that every thing worthy of notice should be written on public tables, and properly preserved. Agreeably to this custom, Pontius Pilate kept the memoirs of the Jewish affairs, which were therefore called *acta Pilati*; and in which was given a particular account of Christ. To these memorials the primitive Christians appealed in their disputes with the Gentiles, as to a most undoubted testimony.—*Pearson on the Creed*, p. 198, eighth edition. See Jones's New Method, vol. ii. p. 404.

perplexity, and his desire to save Jesus: for his wife sent to caution him, by no means to have any hand in the death of "that righteous man," whom he was solicited to condemn; as she had endured much misery, by terrifying dreams respecting him; which made her conclude, that his death would be avenged in an awful manner upon all concerned in it.

Two things, however, determined him to pass the sentence which they desired: the one was, that the accusation was laid as a crime against the Roman government; the other, lest they should have been irritated to make a complaint against him to the Emperor, which he knew they were much inclined to do. All this, however, represents him rather as a political than a just judge.*

If it be asked, why Jesus was so backward to answer in his own defence?† the plain answer

* "Little did the governor imagine who it was that then stood before him! little did he suspect that he himself must one day stand before the tribunal of that very person, whom he was then about to condemn as a criminal."—*Bishop Porteus*.

† The Romans allowed accused persons to answer for themselves. The apostle Paul frequently availed himself of this, and made his defence. (Acts xxiv. 10—21.; xxv. 15—27.; xxvi.) Jesus, long accustomed to speak in public, could not be considered as incapable of pleading his own cause. Pilate

seems to be, as he himself hints, that his time was come, and he was determined to give way to their designs.* Consequently, Barabbas was released, and Jesus delivered to be scourged and crucified.†

Now, whipping or scourging in criminal cases, was a punishment frequently used both by the Jews and Romans. The Jews commonly inflicted it by a whip of three cords, and limited the number of stripes to thirty-nine;‡ and so they gave only thirteen strokes with the scourge of three lashes, that they might be sure not to exceed forty stripes, according to the law in Deuteronomy.§ But the Romans' most usual way of scourging was

was therefore exceedingly amazed to find that he would not avail himself of the opportunity. He believed Jesus to be perfectly innocent; and yet he would neither use arguments nor entreaties, to rescue himself from that terrible death with which he was threatened!

* Wait.

† Matt. xxvii. 26. Barabbas escaped in consequence of Jesus's condemnation. He deserved death, but was preserved, and the righteous and holy Saviour suffered in his stead. This accords, as to the grand outline, with the method of a sinner's salvation, through the sufferings of Christ. The whole process resembled the examination of a sacrifice, that it might be proved to be without blemish, far more than the trial of a criminal for condemnation.

‡ 2 Cor. xi. 24.

§ Chap. xxv. 3.

with such rods or wands as the lictors carried in a bundle before their chief magistrates: and they, not confining themselves to the Jewish number, were exceedingly cruel in this sort of punishment, as appears from Eusebius's account of their inflicting it on the principal martyrs, of whom he says, "All the spectators were astonished when they saw their flesh torn with scourges, even to their veins and arteries, so that their very bowels might be seen." And as our Saviour was scourged at Pilate's order, it seems to have been done by his officers after the Roman fashion, and to have been very severe, as well as disgraceful; for Pilate thereby intended to move the compassion of the Jews toward him, in order to his being released, rather than to have him scourged, in order to his being crucified.*

After this unparalleled act of barbarity to the innocent and lowly "Lamb of God," Pilate, although he was forced to confess that "he found no fault in Jesus," being pressed upon by the bloodthirsty and merciless multitude, at last gave sentence against the Saviour of the world, that he

*This is evident from Luke xxiii. 15, 16. 22, and John xix. 1. 6.

Horace also tells us, "that the flesh was generally severely cut by the whip." See Sat. i. 3. 1. 119.

should be crucified, washing his hands and saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it."* His struggle, on this occasion, shows the power of conscience in the worst of men: and the horror which it often feels (till inured to it) of wilful deliberate murder. "Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children."† "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers; and they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe."‡ "And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head." Had they intended hereby, merely to expose his pretended royalty to

* Matt. xxvii. 24. It is unprecedented in the annals of mankind, for a person condemned to so dreadful a death, to have been at the very time pronounced "innocent," or righteous,—by the person who conducted those that apprehended him (Matt. xxvii.) see verse 4; by the judge who passed sentence upon him, and at length by the very officer who superintended his execution, see ver. 54.; whilst they who clamorously demanded his death could allege no reason for their conduct.

† I shall have occasion to animadvert on this dreadful imprecation in a subsequent part of the treatise.

‡ Grotius says, that it was probably an old purple robe that Pilate had cast off; purple being worn by great persons as a mark of distinction; perhaps a purple vestment with a scarlet robe over it.

ridicule and contempt, a crown of straws might have served as well. But they undoubtedly meant to add *cruelty* to their *scorn*, which especially appeared on their striking him on the head when this crown was on; whereby they nailed down the large thorns* into his forehead and temples, and occasioned exquisite pain, as well as great effusion of blood.† Then they put a “reed in his right hand; and they bowed the knee before

* If the descriptions of the Eastern thorns are to be credited, they are much larger than any known in these parts.—*Doct. ridge*

The following interesting passage is quoted from *Voyages and Travels in the Levant* (p. 288), by my worthy and talented friend, the Rev. Michael Russell LL.D., in his work entitled ‘Palestine, or the Holy Land,’ p. 148.

“There still exists a thorn in Palestine known among botanists by the name of the *Spina Christi*, or Thorn of Christ, and supposed to be the shrub which afforded the crown worn by our Saviour before his crucifixion. It must have been very fit for the purpose, for it has many sharp prickles, well adapted to give pain; and as the leaves greatly resemble those of ivy, it is not improbable that the enemies of the Messiah chose it from its similarity to the plant with which emperors and generals were accustomed to be crowned; and hence that there might be calumny, insult, and derision, meditated in the very act of punishment.”

† Osorius, writing on the sufferings of Christ, observes, that “the crown of thorns bored his head with seventy-two wounds.”

him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! and they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head." Now, as the word *Kalamos* includes all kinds of canes, it is very probable that this which they put into his hand as a sceptre was not a small one; for a blow with a slight reed would scarce have been felt, or been worthy of mention in a detail of such dreadful sufferings. Pilate then "brought Jesus forth," ascended his tribunal, which was not in the judgment-hall, but in a more public place, called "the pavement," (probably from a curious piece of mosaic work which adorned it,) or "Gabbatha," (an elevated place,) and proceeded to pass sentence on the divine and lowly sufferer. And Pilate said unto the Jews, "Behold your king!" perhaps in scorn of them; as if a king crowned with thorns, and covered with stripes, befitted such a people. When they still persisted in demanding his crucifixion, he asked them whether he should "crucify their king;" and though, on other occasions, they had many doubts and objections, even concerning the lawfulness of submitting, or paying tribute to, the Roman emperor; yet to gratify their malice they at once exclaimed, that they had "no king but Cæsar."*

* The jealous tyranny and cruelty of Tiberius Cæsar, who

Upon which Pilate, perhaps deeming this concession, from so turbulent a people, of considerable importance, got over all his scruples, and delivered up Jesus to be crucified.* “And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.”† It was usual for a malefactor to

was then emperor, are well known, and Pilate, probably fearing lest some spies should carry an accusation against him to Rome, immediately yielded to their injustice.

* Josephus expressly assures us, that Pilate having slain a considerable number of seditious Samaritans, was deposed from his government by Vitellius, and sent to Tiberius at Rome, who died before he arrived there. And Eusebius tells us, that quickly after, (having, as others say, been banished to Vienne, in Gaul,) he laid violent hands on himself, falling on his own sword. Agrippa, who was an eye-witness to many of his enormities, speaks of him in his oration to Caius Cæsar, as one who had been a man of a most infamous character.—*Abridged from Doddridge by Scott.*

† Matt. xxvii. 31. We may form some conception of this scene, if we consider the ferocity, haughtiness, and impiety of the idolatrous Roman soldiers, and how they were let loose on the mild and holy Jesus, to give full scope to their savage and cruel contempt, and to divert themselves with his sufferings, till they were weary of mocking him. When this at length was the case, they took off from him the insignia of royalty, and, putting on him his own garments, those who were appointed to be his executioners, led him away to crucify him. Had he suffered as a murderer, they would not

bear his own cross, as *Lipsius* shows from *Artemidorus* and *Plutarch* : the former says, the cross is like to death, and he that is to be fixed to it first bears it. The latter says, And every one of the malefactors that are punished in body, carries out his own cross.* But “ they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name : him they compelled to bear his cross.” This Simon (who was probably suspected to be one of Christ’s disciples,) either carried one end of the cross, Jesus going before, and still bearing the other ; or else, Christ being fatigued by the foregoing watchings and abuses, was too faint to stand under any part of it ; and so Simon carried it all ‘in’ the company after him ; or at least, as some think, that piece of wood which was to be fastened across the upright post, and which was all that used to be carried by the malefactor.†

have thus insulted him, but would have in some measure pitied his anguish, whilst they executed the sentence of the law upon him.—*Scott*.

* *Wetstein* shows this to be the most degrading suffering, that of the punishment inflicted on slaves, who were whipped through the Circus bearing a gallows (*furca*). *Cicero de Divinat.* 126.

† Vide *Guyse* et alii. Jesus had been so harassed, by multiplied fatigues and miseries, that probably he appeared almost exhausted : so that the persons employed might fear lest he should die under the burden, and escape their further

“ And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and children.” Vengeance, beyond example terrible, would shortly come on their city and nation, as the punishment of the enormous wickedness about to be perpetrated. For the days were at hand, when those women would generally be counted most happy, who never had any children; as parents would see their offspring cruelly murdered, or enslaved, or dying by famine or pestilence; nay, mothers would even be driven by extreme hunger to eat their own infants. Of this tragical event, the circumstantial description furnished by the pen of Josephus (a Jewish priest, who had himself been an eye-witness of it), so minutely corresponds with the prediction, that, had we not known the contrary, we could hardly have helped concluding it had been written by a Christian, in order to illustrate it.*

“ And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.”†

cruelties, if they compelled him to bear the cross all the way to Golgotha.

* See the note, p. 113.

† Luke xxiii. 27, 28. 32.

Capital punishments, both among the Jews and Romans, were inflicted without their cities: * consequently, they led Jesus to a place called Golgotha—in the Latin, *Calvary*, or the place of a skull†—so called, either because criminals used to be executed there, or because there was the common charnel house, or repository for dead men's bones and skulls.‡ And this was by the way-side, where persons were continually passing, and where it was usual to erect crosses to make public examples of malefactors, to deter others from committing the like crimes.§ * Here “ they gave him vinegar to

* This was particularly observed in the crucifixion of malefactors.

Credo ego isthuc, extemplo tibi

Esse eundem actutum extra urbem dispessis manibus,

Patibulum cum habebis. —————

PLAUTUS.

Cum Mamertini more atque instituto suo crucem fixissent post urbem in viâ Pompeiâ. Tull.

† Luke xxiii. 33.

‡ *Calvary* was a small eminence on Mount Moriah, without the walls of Jerusalem.

§ And Calvary was made a place of suffering for Christ in conformity to common practice,—as it was usual to crucify on high places and mountains. *Lipsius de Cruce*, l. iii. c. 13.

Alexander, the Emperor, ordered an eunuch to be crucified by the way-side, in which his servants used commonly to go to his country-house. *Quinctilian* (*Declamat.* 275,) observes,

drink, mingled with gall."* As it is written in the Book of Psalms, "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."† It was customary on such occasions to give the person who was about to suffer, some kind of stupifying draught, as appears from the following passage in the Talmud: "It was usual to give the person who was to be put to death, a draught of wine mixed with frankincense, to make them more insensible of pain." This was commonly provided by their friends, and made an agreeable infusion of myrrh or frankincense in wine. In place of which, the soldiers seem here, at the instigation of the Jews, to have given Jesus, by way of derision, acid wine, mixed with some bitter herb or gall.

"And it was the third hour; and they crucified him."‡ That is, about nine o'clock in the morning. The rulers must have been very early and active in their proceedings, to have gone through so much business, and to have surmounted so many difficulties, by that hour.

"As often as we crucify criminals, the most noted ways are chosen, where most may behold, and most may be moved with fear."

* Matthew xxvii. 34.

† Psalm lxix. 21.

‡ Mark xv. 25.

Behold now, the “Lamb of God” “brought to the slaughter!” See how quietly he submits to the insolence of the proud—the fury of the wrathful—the blood-thirsty malice of his enemies! “As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”* When a person was crucified, he was nailed to the cross, as it lay upon the ground, through each hand extended to its utmost stretch, and through both the feet together: then the cross was erected, and the foot of it thrust, with a violent jog, into a hole prepared in the ground, to receive it; and this jog disjoined the body, whose whole weight hung upon the nails, that went through the hands and feet, till the person expired by the excruciating pain which it occasioned. This kind of death, which was the most cruel, shameful, and cursed death that could be devised, was used by the Romans only for slaves, and the basest of the people, who were capital offenders; but Jesus was to endure this, that the very nature of the death itself might intimate *his bearing our sins in his own body on the tree; and being made a curse for us.*†

* Isaiah liii. 7.

† “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Gal. iii. 13. See also 1 Peter

At this dreadful moment, while they were piercing his hands and his feet, instead of crying out through the acuteness of his pain, he calmly, though fervently, prayed for them, and for all who had any influence in his death, beseeching God to forgive them, and excusing them by the only circumstance that could alleviate their guilt,—their ignorance! “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”* This was infinite meekness and goodness, truly worthy of the Son of God; an example of forgiveness, which, though it never can be equalled by any, is fit to be imitated by all. Dr. Heylin† has well described our Lord’s passion, as follows: “The appointed soldiers dig the hole in which the cross is to be erected; the nails and the hammer are ready; the cross is placed on the ground; and Jesus lies down upon the bed of sorrows. They nail him to it; they erect it; his nerves crack; his blood distils; he hangs upon

ii. 24. “It is a very remarkable circumstance,” Bishop Porteus observes, “that our Saviour was crucified, and our deliverance from the bondage of sin completed, in the same month and on the same day of the month, that the Israelites were delivered from the bondage of Egypt, by their departure from that land. For the Israelites went out of Egypt, and Christ was put to death, on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan.”

* Luke xxiii. 34.

† Theolog. Lect. p. 103.

his wounds, a spectacle to heaven and earth.”* Thus was the only-begotten Son of God, who came down to save the world, crucified by his own creatures. “Hear, O heaven! O earth, earth, hear! The Lord hath nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against him.”

It was usual to put inscriptions upon the cross, representing the crime of the person hanging upon it: so Pilate (who seems to have intended an irony upon the Jews in general) “wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.”† This was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; the three languages at that time most generally understood; that all who were then at Jerusalem might be able to read it. “Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, write not, the King of the Jews; but that he said, I am the King of the Jews. Pilate an-

* And this was the lowly and innocent Jesus, who wept at the grave of Lazarus (John xi. 35.), shed tears over his falling country (Luke xi. 41.), and mourned over the city, saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” (Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xiii. 34.)

† John xix. 19.

swered, what I have written I have written ;” that is, ‘ what I have written shall stand ; what I have written shall not be altered.’ He thus rejected their application, because they had constrained him to crucify Jesus, contrary to his judgment and inclination.* The garments of Jesus were now claimed by those who were his immediate executioners, according to the custom of their own country ; but as the uppermost vesture (being a cloak or mantle) was of one piece of cloth, without any seam,† and would be spoiled by being cut in pieces, they cast lots for that ; and so, without design, fulfilled the prophecy of the Psalmist, “ They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”†

Two thieves were crucified with him—“ the one on his right hand, the other on the left.”§ They were all three in a row, and Jesus was placed in

* This seems to have been done with that warmth and inflexibility which PHILLO represents as part of Pilate’s character.

† Very probably this vesture was the work of some of those women, who ministered to our Lord ; and it seems to have been considered as both curious and valuable.

‡ Psalm xxii. 18. They stripped Christ of his clothes before they fixed him on the cross, and crucified him naked, as was the custom of the Romans. *Lipsius de Cruce*, lib. ii. c. 7.

§ Mark xv. 27.

the middle, as if he had been a more notorious criminal than either of the other sufferers. This, however, like all other things, was overruled by the providence of God, to fulfil another ancient prophecy of the Messiah's "being numbered with transgressors"*—which intimated, that though he was perfectly innocent himself, yet he stood in the eye of the law as an offender, whilst he bore the sins of his people. "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save; if he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God."† This insulting demand showed, that all the unquestionable miracles he had wrought before, in healing

* Isaiah liii. 12.

† Matt. xxvii. 39—43. Probably they did not know, that in this daring impiety, enmity, and blasphemy, they used the very words which the prophet had put into the mouths of the murderers of the Messiah, a thousand years before! (as may be seen in Psalm xxii. 7, 8.)

the sick, and raising the dead, stood for nothing, and were not to be believed; unless he would do that, which in reality would have been inconsistent with the great design of his coming into the world for the redemption of his people. The miracle was, that the Son of the Most High hung bleeding still upon the cross! Had he come down from the accursed tree, such were the obstinate prejudices of their hearts, that even then they would not have believed in him. And yet, as Grotius says, if Christ had designed only to confirm his doctrine, and not to make an atonement for sin, his delivering himself from the cross, after he was nailed to it, would have undoubtedly answered that end, much more than his undergoing death itself could be supposed to do it. "And one of the malefactors which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." We may challenge universal history to furnish another instance, in which any person, expiring under the tortures of a cruel execution, was treated with such derision, contempt, and mockery, by all ranks and orders of men, and even by one of his fellow-sufferers. This was reserved for the holy Jesus, "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," "God manifest in the flesh:" and this

transaction is a full demonstration of apostate man's rancorous enmity to the holy image, truth, and law of his Creator: and a sufficient confutation of all the flattering representations of proud moralists and philosophers, who know more of every thing than of God and of themselves. Indeed, prophets and martyrs, who were renewed to some measure of the same image, and stood up for the same truths, always met with an adequate proportion of the same treatment: but it has been confined to them, and malefactors have almost universally been exempted from it. The perfect patience and meekness of this holy sufferer, in the midst of such provocations, which he was well able to avenge, is truly worthy of our peculiar attention.

But the other malefactor rebuked his neighbour, saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom: and Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."*

* Luke xxiii. 39—43.

Here was evidently the substance, or embryo, of all Christian graces, which would have been expanded in all the actions of a holy life, had time been allowed. Perhaps the thief actually more honoured Christ in this short space than many do, who live a number of years to profess faith in him : and, in short, here were evidently both the title to “ the inheritance of the saints in light,” and the meetness for it. Our Lord, therefore, without delay, and in the most solemn manner, assured him, that “ on that very day he should be with him in Paradise.” “ That day was then passing apace, and many crucified persons used to hang far longer on the cross, than from the time when Jesus and the two malefactors were suspended, till the close of it : but our Lord predicted both his own death, and that of the penitent thief, before the setting of the sun, when the Jewish day ended, and their immediate entrance into a state of happiness. This was doubtless intended as the grand display of the Redeemer’s power and grace, in the view of numberless invisible spectators ; and for the instruction of mankind, in all future ages, about those things that relate to the freedom and sovereignty of his mercy, the efficacy of his atoning blood, and the omnipotence of his saving arm. Thus he tri-

umphed over Satan upon the cross, and delivered the prey from the very jaws of that devouring lion, even in the crisis of his deepest humiliation. Thus he communicated life, when he was in the very agonies of death; and he dispensed pardons, and disposed of kingdoms, as from a glorious throne, even while hanging on the tree, as a slave and a malefactor!"*

This occurred "about the sixth hour," when an extraordinary alteration in the face of nature took place, for "there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour."†—A change peculiarly proper, while the Sun of Righteousness was withdrawing his beams from the land of Israel, and from the world; not only because it was a miraculous testimony formed by the Almighty to his innocence, but also because it was a fit emblem of his departure and its effects. The Jews had been accustomed to the figurative language relative to the eclipses of luminaries, as significative of some extraordinary revolution or calamity; and could not but recollect the words of Amos on this occasion—"And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down

* Scott, Henry, Browne.

† From noon until three o'clock.

at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day; and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.”* The heathens, likewise, had been taught to look on these circumstances as indications of the preparation of some atrocious and enormous crime. And what greater could the Jews be guilty of than that which they were now committing?

This darkness beginning about noon, and continuing till Jesus expired, was not the effect of an ordinary eclipse of the sun, for that can never happen except when the moon is about the change; whereas it was now full, as it always is at the time of the passover; not to mention that total darkness, occasioned by eclipses of the sun, never continues above twelve or fifteen minutes. Wherefore, it must have been produced by the divine power, in a manner not to be accounted for from natural causes. The darkness was so remarkable, that some heathen authors have mentioned it; and speak of it as universal,† and so great that the

* Amos viii. 9, 10.

† Tertullian seems to embrace this opinion, calling the

stars appeared in heaven, and the day was turned into night. It is reported, says Suidas, that Dionysius saw it in Egypt; and knowing that it could not be a natural eclipse, because it was at the time of the full moon, and lasted three hours together, he, though a heathen philosopher, said, "Either the Divinity suffers, or sympathizes with a sufferer; or the frame of the world is dissolved."*

To continue the narrative of the Evangelist, "There stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman,† behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."‡

failure of the sun "the misfortune of the world," which they had recorded in the Roman archives.

* *Poole's Synopsis*. "But were we to suppose, with others," GUYSE observes, "that this darkness was only over all the land of Palestine, it was no less miraculous."

† "Woman." The greatest princesses were thus accosted, even by their own servants, among the ancients; and Jesus now spoke to his mother from the cross, with the most endeared affection and tenderness.

‡ John xix. 25, 26, 27.

The inward anguish, and the conflicting thoughts and affections with which the mind of Mary must have been agitated, on this most distressing occasion, can never be described nor imagined. But, considering all the expectations excited by the conception, birth, and infancy of Jesus, and all the miracles, and other extraordinary circumstances of his public ministry, she could scarcely doubt, even when she saw him expire on the cross, that he was the promised "Messiah, the king of Israel." After Joseph's death, and our Lord's entrance on his ministry, it is probable that Mary had generally attended him : and, being now present to behold his crucifixion, Jesus, amidst all his own sufferings was tenderly mindful of her ; and by turning her attention to John, the beloved disciple, as one who would be as a son to her, and whom she should love, for his sake, as her own son ; and by mentioning her to him as his "*mother*," to whom he was to perform the duty of that relation for *his* sake ; he effectually influenced John to take her to him, and to provide for her, and treat her with all respect and affection, as long as she lived. How long that was, or where John from that time resided, we are not informed in Scripture ; and history gives us little information that can be depended on. It is probable, that

Mary was exposed to persecution among the primitive Christians; and some of the ancients report that she at length died a martyr.

“And about the ninth hour,” our Lord being probably oppressed with a measure of the same inward horror, as when in the garden, cried out aloud, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God,* my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”† This doleful exclamation of Jesus showed, that the total want of “the light of God’s countenance” on his soul, and the sense of his frown and wrath against him, as our Surety, were far more dreadful than all his complicated outward sufferings; that his confidence in his Father, together with his love, zeal, submission, and every holy affection, were unabated and most perfect, even in that dreadful hour; and that there was no cause in him, why he should be thus forsaken, it being wholly through his willing answerableness for the sins of his people:

* There is an hidden emphasis in the Hebrew word. *EL* signifies a *strong God*: *ELI, ELI*, my *strong God*, my *strong God*.

† Matt. xxvii. 46. Psalm xxii. 1. “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.” Lamentations i. 12.

yet he was brought into this extreme agony to give God's wrath satisfaction for the sins of the world ; to which end the Godhead did not only for a time suspend the influence of its power, as Diodati observes—so far as it was fitting to let him suffer incomprehensible pains, even to the full measure of God's ordinance, (though it never forsook him so far as to disable him to vanquish and overcome them)*—but did also make him feel the horror and weight of God's wrath against sin, the burden of which he had undertaken.† “ And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold he calleth Elias.”‡ Grotius remarks, that these could not have been the Roman soldiers, who cannot be supposed to have read so much of the Jewish Scriptures. or to have conversed so much with Jews upon religious subjects, as to have been acquainted with the character and name of Elias. Nor indeed can we suppose that they were our Lord's countrymen, who must have frequently read this Psalm§ in the original, and consequently have

* “ Behold my servant, whom I uphold ; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth ; I have put my Spirit upon him ; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” Isaiah xlii. 1.

† See Matt. xxvi. 38, 39. Luke xxii. 44 ; and Gal. iii. 13.

‡ Mark xv. 35.

§ Psalm xxii.

known the meaning of this quotation. They might have been the Hellenist Jews, who, hearing the word "Eli," and being ignorant of Hebrew, might naturally imagine, that our Lord was calling upon Elias. What may contribute to this mistake; was the general opinion, that Elias was to appear again in person among the Jews; that he was to precede the Messiah; and that the time of his appearance was likewise at hand. Although Christ is said to have been "fairer than the children of men," since his human nature was the immediate produce of the Holy Spirit, and without sin,—Behold him at this moment! wounded and bleeding, wearied and pale, worn and wasted with the agonies of mind and body, as the prophet had said,* with "no form nor comeliness;" "no beauty that we should desire him"†—his "strength dried up," when he cried "I thirst;"‡ encompassed by his enemies, who are compared to bulls for their rage, their fierceness, and their fury against him.§ And to a pack of hounds surrounding a distressed and pant-

* Isaiah liii. 2.

† When our Lord was but a little past thirty years of age, his sorrows, pains, and persecutions had so worn him, that the Jews judged him towards fifty. John viii. 57.

‡ John xix. 28.

§ Psalm xxii. 12. See also Psalm ii. 1, 2.

ing animal which they have hunted down, and whose blood they are insatiably thirsting after.*

Judge of what he felt by the expressions of the prophet, in the mystical Psalm, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.—But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.—I am poured out like water: My heart is melted like wax in the midst of my bowels. Thou hast brought me into the dust of death. My God, my God, why hast THOU forsaken me?"

See him writhing with agonies!—his bones appearing through his flesh †—"poured out like water," and "his heart as wax melted in the midst of his bowels." ‡ How awful must have been the wrath and fury of God, which was poured forth

* Psalm xxii. 16.

† Psalm xxii. 17. THEODORET says, When our blessed Lord was extended on the cross, and his limbs writhed with agonies, the spectators might easily tell all his bones; and it is recorded that they *looked or stared at him*. See Zech. xii. 10. The Chaldee reads, *I can count all my wounds*.

‡ Psalm xxii. 14.

like fire upon him ! If the heart of Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, *melted* at it, what heart can endure, or what hands be strong, when God deals with man in his wrath ?* When Jesus, in his excruciating agony, said, " I thirst," they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it to his mouth.†

* Ezekiel xxii. 14.

† John xix. 28, 29. Our Saviour's great thirst must have been occasioned by his agony of mind — by the quantity of blood which he lost by the scourging—by the crown of thorns, which was driven deeply into his temples—and by the wounds, from the nails passing through his hands and feet.

I met with the following passage in a work entitled "The Young Christian;" it is quoted from "the narrative of a soldier," and may serve to illustrate this point :—

" I remember well as we moved down in column, shot and shell flew over and through it in quick succession. We sustained little injury from either, but a captain of the twenty-ninth had been dreadfully lacerated by a ball, and lay directly in our path. We passed close to him ; he knew us all ; and the heart-rending tone in which he called to us for *water*, or to *kill him*, I shall never forget. He lay alone, and we were in motion and could give him no succour, for on this trying day such of the dying as could not walk, lay unattended where they fell. All was hurry and struggle: every arm was wanted in the field."

" During severe *hæmorrhagy* (that is, a great flow of blood) the pulse is frequent, the skin is hot, and there is *great thirst* and restlessness ; with a pale and bloodless countenance, great weakness, and disposition to syncope," (that is, to fainting or swooning.)—Gregory's "Practice of Physic," and Cooper's "Surgical Dictionary."

“The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.”* But when Jesus had received the vinegar, knowing that all things were now accomplished, he said, “It is finished.”† What was finished? All that the prophets had foretold; all that the types prefigured; all that the justice of God required, as an atonement for sin, in order to the reconciliation of sinners to himself; all that the honour of his law and government demanded: and whatever was necessary for the glory of all the divine perfections, in man’s salvation, was now completely finished: and so was the victory over Satan, sin, the world, and death, as far as our Lord’s personal obedience and sufferings were concerned.

Perhaps the darkness continued nearly to the time when Jesus said “It is finished:” and then the darkness and horror seem to have been removed also from his mind; and an inexpressible joy in the sense of his Father’s love, the near approach of his glory, and the blessed effects of his sufferings, to have filled his soul. He therefore immediately after exclaimed, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit;”‡ and having

* Matt. xxvii. 49.

† John xix. 28. 30.

‡ Luke xxiii. 46.

“cried again with a loud voice,” he “yielded up the ghost.”* That is, (as the original hath it) *he dismissed his spirit*; an expression admirably suited to our Lord’s words; “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.”† Showing (as the *strong cry*—which so much impressed the Centurion—did) that he died by the *voluntary act* of his own mind; while, by his own power, and in a way peculiar to himself, he alone of all men that ever existed, could have continued alive, even in the greatest tortures, as long as he pleased, or have retired from the body whenever he thought fit. This view of the case, says the venerable Doddridge, suggests an illustration of the *love of Christ* manifested in his *death*, beyond what is commonly observed; inasmuch as he did not use this power to quit his body as soon as ever it was fastened to the cross, leaving only an insensible corpse to the cruelty of his murderers: but continued his abode in it, with a steady resolution, as long as it was proper: and then retired from it

* Matthew xxvii. 50.

† John x. 17, 18.

with a majesty and dignity never known, nor to be known, in any other death :---*dying*, if it may be so expressed, *like* the PRINCE OF LIFE! “And behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.”* This happened about the ninth hour, which was the hour of evening sacrifice. Some of the priests must have been in the temple, burning incense, at the time when it happened. The sudden rending of the veil must therefore have struck terror into the priests, and suddenly exposed the HOLY OF HOLIES,† (which had hitherto been carefully concealed,) to the view of the people. The Jewish Rabbins themselves mention this as having happened about forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and consider it as a presage of that destruction. Hereby it was intimated, that the distinction between Jew and Gentile was now abolished, and free access allowed to all true believers, of whatever nation, to enter through Jesus Christ into the kingdom of heaven. Then, saith the Evangelist, “the earth did quake.”—Now, Pliny and Macrobius both mention a very

* Matt. xxvii. 51.

† From the allusion made to this, Hebrews x. 19, 20. it appears not to have been the veil before the Holy Place, but that which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies.

remarkable earthquake which happened in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, and by which no less than twelve cities were destroyed in Asia. “And the rocks rent.”—We are told, that the clefts in the rocks are still to be seen at Jerusalem. Mr. Fleming informs us—in his *Christology*—that a Deist lately travelling through Palestine, was converted by viewing one of these rocks, which still remains torn asunder, not in the weakest place, but across the veins; a plain proof that it was done in a supernatural manner.* Then “the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.”† The ancient sepulchres were hewn out of rocks, which, being rent by the earthquake, discovered the cells in which the bodies of the dead were deposited. Some suppose that these saints were the Patriarchs, others, that they were the Old Testament Martyrs; but it seems more natural to apprehend, that they were such as Simon, Zecharias, John the Baptist, and others, who believed in

* Sandys, in his excellent *Travels*, page 162, has given an accurate description and delineation of this fissure.

† Matthew xxvii. 52, 53.

Christ, and were known to many in Jerusalem.* But though their graves were at this time opened, the persons did not rise out of them till the resurrection of Jesus, who thereby demonstrated himself to be the first fruits from the dead.† Consequently, it seems that the tombs stood open all the Sabbath, when the law would not allow any attempt to close them. What an awful and astonishing spectacle must this have been! especially if their resurrection was not instantaneously accomplished, but by such slow degrees, as that represented in Ezekiel's vision.‡ “Now when the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus,§ saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.”|| Only four soldiers were employed in nailing Jesus to the cross; but a considerable number, commanded by a cen-

* It would be wrong to indulge vain curiosity, by inquiring further who they were: but as they are said to have “appeared to many,” and not to have continued with them; it seems probable, that they also went to heaven, with or after their ascended Saviour.

† Doddridge.

‡ Ezekiel xxxvii.

§ It was usual with the Romans to set soldiers to watch those who were crucified, not only before they expired, but after they were dead, lest they should be taken down and buried.—*Lipsius de Cruce*, lib. ii. c. 16.

|| Matt. xxvii. 54. Mark xv. 39.

turion, watched him whilst he hung there. These were greatly alarmed at what they saw and heard, and "they glorified God," perhaps by confessing their guilt and deprecating his vengeance; and they acknowledged, that "Truly this was the Son of God." It is not to be supposed, that the soldiers, who joined with the centurion in this confession, and who seem to have been the same as had crowned Jesus with thorns and mocked him, should understand the full meaning of these words: yet we may reasonably conclude, that this conviction terminated in the conversion at least of some of them, and perhaps of the very persons who nailed him to the cross; according to his prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." "And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned."* "And many women were there, beholding afar off, among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children;"† " (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women

* Luke xxiii. 48.

† Matt. xxvii. 55, 56.

which came up with him unto Jerusalem."* Anxious concern and affection induced them to be present; and perhaps they stood afar off, for fear of the outrages of the multitude. Words cannot express—nay, imagination fails to conceive, the mixed emotions of love, reverence, gratitude, sorrow,

* Mark xv. 41. How affectionate and attentive to our Lord, was womankind! be it here remembered and related to her honour. If death and the curse came into the world by a woman, Gen. iii. so also did life and health. God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, Gal. iv. 4. The women of the Old Testament desired children, if happily one or other might become the mother of the Saviour of the world. And when the Saviour was come, women rejoiced in him, before either man or angel, Luke i. 42—46. We read not that man ever gave unto Christ so much as one farthing, but the women followed him, and ministered to him of their substance, Luke viii. 2, 3. 'Twas a woman that washed his feet with tears, Luke vii. 37—50. And a woman that anointed his body to the burial, John xi. 2; xii. 3. They were women who wept when he was going to the cross, Luke xxiii. 27. And women that followed him from the cross, Matt. xlvii. 55, 56. Luke xxiii. 55. And that sat over against his sepulchre, when he was buried, Matt. xxvii. 61. They were women that were first with him at his resurrection morn, Luke xxiv. 1. And women that brought tidings first to his disciples that he was risen from the dead, Luke xxiv. 22, 23. Women therefore are highly favoured, and notwithstanding all the reproach which bad men may cast upon them, are sharers with us in the grace of life, and far more worthy than we, of eternal crowns of glory!

compassion, anxiety, and despondency, which must have agitated their minds on this occasion. We find from John, who also was present (as before remarked), that "Mary the mother of Jesus," was a spectator of the distressing scene; when "a sword" must indeed have "pierced her" heart and inmost "soul."*

When they intended to hasten the death of the crucified person his legs were broken: for, otherwise, they sometimes lingered on the cross for several days in the most excessive agony and torture. "The Jews, therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day, (for that Sabbath-day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.† But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already they brake not his legs."‡ And the reason Jesus had expired before

* Luke ii. 35.

† And thus they were instrumental to the fulfilment of our Lord's promise to the penitent thief, that he should "*that day* be with him in paradise."

‡ John xix. 31, 32, 33. According to the Jewish law, Deut. xxi. 22, 23, the body of one that was hanged on a tree,

the other two, arose, either from the intense distress which he felt upon his mind; or proceeded rather from his having laid down his life willingly, so soon as the appointed time was come, and, as some think, just at the hour when the Paschal lamb was to be slain.* Then “one of the soldiers with a spear” (in a most contemptuous and inhuman manner) “pierced his side, and forthwith came therout blood and water.”† How far the spear entered Christ’s body, and whether it struck into the cavity of the breast, or into the pericardium, and let out the liquid in which the heart swims there; or whether it pierced the heart itself, has been variously conjectured; and possibly, it may be difficult to account for this distinct flow of blood and water upon the principles of anatomy. But it was an evident proof that Jesus was really dead; and there was something extraordinary and

was not to remain all night, but to be taken down that day, and buried,—though this was not always observed. 2 Sam. xxi. 9, 10. What was the usage of the Jews *at this time* is not certain,—according to the Roman laws, such bodies hung till they were consumed, or devoured by birds of prey; wherefore, that their land might not be defiled, and especially their Sabbath, by the bodies remaining on the cross, they desired to have them taken down.

* Vide Wait.

† John xix. 34.

mysterious, if not miraculous, in this circumstance of his death, since the Evangelist here takes such particular notice of it,—lays such weight upon the truth of his record about it, saying, “he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe;”*—and refers to it as a matter of great importance, adding, “This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood: and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.”† Here it is evident that the Apostle considers the blood and water as emblems of the distinct parts of salvation; namely, the pardon of our sins through the atoning blood of Christ, and the cleansing of our hearts by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, which is conferred upon us through the obedience unto death of our divine Saviour; and of which, indeed, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are signs, memorials, and pledges.

John xix. 35.

† 1 John, v. 6, 7, 8.

Now, "these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."* "And behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor, and he was a good man, and a just: (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them :) he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews,† who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus."‡ "And Pilate marvelled if he was already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph."§ Let it here

* John xix. 36. Exodus xii. 46. Numbers ix. 12. Psalms xxii. 14. xxxiv. 20. xxxv. 10.

† Arimathea was the territory about Ramatha, a high mountain near Joppa, and situated betwixt it and Jerusalem. Joseph seems to have been a member of the Sanhedrim, from what is said of his not consenting to the death of Jesus: and it is moreover conjectured, that he was also one of the Governor's counsellors, which he might be, if he had the privilege of a Roman citizen, as Paul had.

‡ Luke xxiii. 50, 51, 52. "His confidence must have been very great: as by asking for the body of Jesus, he could not but openly oppose himself to all the Jews, and even to Pilate himself."—BEZA.

§ Mark xv. 44, 45. Jesus hung six hours in torture on the cross, yet Pilate marvelled that he died so soon! His care in ascertaining Christ's death, precluded those objections, which

be remembered, that the rich and high station of Joseph are mentioned, not out of any vanity and ostentation, that a person of such eminence should pay respect to the body of our blessed Lord ; but chiefly to show, how strangely God brought about an ancient prophecy concerning the Messiah, namely, that notwithstanding the infamous manner of his dying, he should “ make his grave with the rich at his death ;”^{*} which, in itself, was a most unlikely thing ; not only because the bodies of them that were crucified, did, by the Roman laws, hang upon the gibbet, sometimes until they were consumed, but because the Jews (though they did not allow of this severity to the dead) did nevertheless always bury their malefactors in some public, neglected, and ignominious place ; and so, in all probability, must our Saviour have been treated, had not Joseph applied himself to the Governor, in whose disposal the bodies of executed persons were.[†] “ And there came also Nicodemus, (which

the Jews might otherwise doubtless have started against the reality of his resurrection, seeing his body was conceded for interment to his friends. We do not find, that any, either of the rulers or people, ever pretended that he had not really been dead.

^{*} Isaiah liii. 9.

[†] Although Joseph had not declared himself hitherto openly for Jesus, he might be encouraged to make this request, from the reluctance which Pilate had shown to condemn Jesus.

at the first came to Jesus by night,)* and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight."† "Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand;"‡ "and rolled a great

* John iii. 1, 2, and vii. 50.

† John xix. 39. This was the practice of the Jews: Hence we read of "the spices of the dead." It was one of the ceremonies customary in Israel to perform to the dead. *Maimonides* observes that they anoint them with various sorts of spices. (*GILL, in loc.*)

Notwithstanding the Jews object to the quantity of spices brought to embalm the body of Jesus, as being unnecessarily profuse and incredible, it appears from their own writings that they were used in great abundance on some such occasions, as may be seen from 2 Chronicles, (chap. xvi. verse 14.) In the Talmud, (*Massecheth Semacoth, viii.*) it is said that no less than eighty pounds of spices were used at the funeral of Rabbi Gamaliel the Elder; and at the funeral of Herod, *Josephus* (*Antiq. xvii. 8, 3,*) informs us, that the procession was followed by five hundred of his domestics carrying spices.

‡ John xix. 40—42. The place of our Lord's crucifixion and sepulchre, as shown to travellers at present, is within the city. If then the right place be shown, as it seems probable, the site of Jerusalem must have been considerably altered in the lapse of so many ages.

stone unto the door of the sepulchre.”* “And Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joses, beheld where he was laid.”† “And the women also which came with him from GALILEE, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath-day according to the commandment ”‡ The circumstances of this sepulchre and burial, so minutely described, afford a most convincing evidence of the certainty of the resurrection of Jesus. *First*, because the sepulchre was near the city; where the disciples, after their late panic, would not venture to form a party to carry him away; especially as it was full moon, and the whole city and suburbs at this time so much crowded with people who had come up to the passover.§ *Secondly*, because it was a new sepulchre, so that no other person can be supposed to have risen :|| nor could the resurrection be occa-

* Mark xv. 46. Matthew xxvii. 60.

† Mark xv. 47.

‡ Luke xxiii. 55, 56. These ingredients they brought with a design of testifying their respect, by embalming the body of Jesus, their faith failing them with regard to his resurrection, which he had once and again foretold whilst he was yet with them.

§ As Stanhope has justly remarked.

|| As sin and death commenced in a garden, the conqueror

sioned by his touching the bones of some deceased Prophet, as formerly happened by the bones of Elisha.* *Thirdly*, because it was hewn out of a rock,† incapable of being undermined or dug through; and therefore there was no possible way for a person deposited in a place so contrived, to get out again, except only at the mouth or door of the cave.‡ And, *Fourthly*, because a large stone, which (according to Mr. Maui Irel, who saw it) is two yards and a quarter long, one broad, and one thick, closed up the entrance of it, which was watched by a strong guard of sixty soldiers: so that, as the sentry would not suffer the body to be conveyed out by this way, the nature of the place would not allow it by any other; and, therefore, had not our Lord been more than man, he never

of both rose and triumphed over them in a like place; and Christ's rising from a new tomb might be an emblem of his sanctifying the grave, as the first fruit of them that sleep in Jesus.

* 2 Kings xiii. 21.

† The sepulchres were not only made in rocks, but had doors by which one could go in and out. These doors were fastened with a large and broad stone rolled against them. It was at the shutting up of the sepulchre with this stone that morning began, and after it was shut with this sepulchral stone, it was not lawful to open it.

‡ Whitby, Keith, &c.

could have forced his passage out. It is of mighty significance to us, that so punctual a description is given the world of our blessed Lord's burial, and all the circumstances relating to it, since they all contribute great strength to these two most important articles of the Christian faith, **THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS.***

* The Apostle Paul, as a matter of the greatest importance, had delivered to the Christians at Corinth, as also to other churches, even as he had received it of the Lord Jesus : (1 Corinth. xi. 23—28. Isaiah xxi. 10. Acts xx. 18—27.) that he, the Messiah, the Son of God, had died, a spotless sacrifice of infinite value, for the sins of mankind, as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," in order, "that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life:" and this agreed with the type, prophecies, and promises of the scriptures : that, being really dead, Pilate had delivered his body to Joseph of Arimathea, to be buried ; and that on the third day he arose again, as it had been foretold. (Psalm xvi. 10. Matt. xii. 38—40. Acts ii. 25—32.) To demonstrate his resurrection, on which the whole of Christianity rested, he first appeared to Peter ; (Luke xxiv. 32—35.) then, in the evening of that day, to those of the twelve Apostles who were assembled ; and on the evening of the succeeding first day of the week, when Thomas was present and confessed him as "his Lord and God:" (John xx. 19—29 :) that afterwards he appeared to above five hundred disciples at once ; doubtless in Galilee, where he was most known, where many of his disciples lived, and where he had appointed to meet the Apostles. (Matt. xxviii. 16.) Much

I shall now bring this Treatise to a conclusion, by quoting Newton's observations on that dreadful im-

the greatest part of these had been still preserved, to be living witnesses of that great event; though "some had fallen asleep," having died in faith and hope, and so departed to be present with their Lord. (1 Corinth. xv. 3—11.) Afterwards James was favoured with a visit from his risen Saviour. Then he was seen of all the apostles, before and at his ascension. (Matt. xxviii. 16—20. Mark xvi. 14—20. Luke xxiv. 36—53. Acts i. 1—8. x. 36—43 :) and last of all, he had graciously manifested himself to Paul also, in such a manner, that he could not but assuredly know him to be Jesus, who had been crucified. (Acts ix. 1—30.) But, as if all human testimony was a small matter, in such an infinitely important concern, God himself was pleased to bear witness with the Apostles, in a most extraordinary manner; conferring upon them the gifts of tongues and of working miracles, by the Holy Spirit; and enabling them to impart the same to others by the laying on of their hands. (John xv. 26, 27. Acts viii. 18—24. Heb. ii. 4.) Thus the number of unexceptionable witnesses was increased; the testimony to our Lord's resurrection was diffused on every side; and his most inveterate enemies could not deny, that most extraordinary miracles were performed by those who attested that event. (Acts iv. 13—22, particularly verse 16.) In this manner the number of the disciples of Jesus was speedily multiplied, by tens of thousands being converted from among those, who had just before demanded his crucifixion: and Christianity got ground rapidly on every side, in opposition to all the wealth, power, learning, superstition, and philosophy of the world; and by unarmed, unlearned, poor, and despised instruments: till at length whole nations embraced the religion of the cru-

precation, "His blood be on us, and on our children!"* which the Jews made use of when they were about to crucify the Son of God, and which was inflicted upon them in the calamities which they suffered in the siege of their city, and in the difficulties with which they have struggled ever since.

Upon examination, we shall find a strong correspondence between their crime and their punishment.† They put Jesus to death when the nation was assembled to celebrate the passover; and when the nation too, was assembled to celebrate the passover, Titus shut them up within the walls of Jerusalem. The rejection of the true Messiah was their crime; and the following of false Messiahs

cified Nazarene, as the prophets had expressly foretold. (Jer. xvi. 19—21. Amos ix. 11, 12. Zech. viii. 20—23.) These effects, which could be ascribed to no power but that of God, and the continuance of so humbling and holy a religion in the world to this day, form a demonstration *even to us* of this important fact: nor has any past event since the beginning of the world ever been proved, with such complicated and abundant evidence. St. Paul's conversion, and the prophecies contained in the writings of those who testified our Lord's resurrection, and which have been accomplished for almost eighteen hundred years, may be considered as additional complete divine attestations. *

* Matt. xxvii. 25.

† Bishop Porteus makes the same observations.—See Josephus: and Jackson's "Eternal Truth of the Scriptures."

to their destruction was their punishment. They sold and bought Jesus as a slave ; and they themselves were afterwards sold and bought as slaves at the lowest prices. They preferred a robber and murderer to Jesus, whom they crucified between two thieves ; and they themselves were afterwards infested with bands of thieves and robbers. They put Jesus to death lest the Romans should come and take away their place and nation ; and the Romans did come and take away their place and nation. They crucified Jesus before the walls of Jerusalem ; and before the walls of Jerusalem they themselves were crucified in such numbers, that it is said, room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses for the bodies.* Surely it is not possible

* See NEWTON *On the Prophecies*, vol. ii. p. 354, and KEILH's *Evidence of Prophecy*, an admirable work, which ought to be in the hands of every Christian, and from which I extract the following interesting passage concerning the destruction of Jerusalem :

“ *There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time—no, nor ever shall be. There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon his people. These are days of vengeance.* Such are some of the words of Jesus, relative to the destruction of Jerusalem ; and all the previous prophecies regarding it were of the same sad import. The particulars of the siege are all related by Josephus, and form a detail of miseries that admit not of exaggeration ; and

for any man to lay these things together, and not conclude the imprecation of the Jews to be remarkably and literally fulfilled upon them !

which he repeatedly declares, in terms that entirely accord with the language of prophecy, are altogether unequalled in the history of the world. No general description can give a just idea of calamities the most terrible that ever nation suffered. The Jews had assembled in their city from all the surrounding country, to keep the feast of unleavened bread. It was crowded with inhabitants when they were all imprisoned within its walls. The passover, which was commemorative of their first great deliverance, had collected them for their last signal destruction. Before any external enemy appeared, the fiercest dissensions prevailed—the blood of thousands was shed by their brethren, they destroyed and burned in their frenzy their common provisions for the siege; they were destitute of any regular government, and divided into three factions. On the extirpation of one of these, each of the others contended for the mastery. The most ferocious and frantic,—the robbers and zealots, as they are indiscriminately called, prevailed at last. They entered the temple, under the pretence of offering sacrifices, and carried concealed weapons for the purpose of assassination. They slew the priests at the very altar; and their blood, instead of that of the victims for sacrifice, flowed around it. They afterwards rejected all terms of peace with the enemy: none were suffered to escape from the city—every house was entered—every article of subsistence was pillaged—and the most wanton barbarities were committed. Nothing could restrain their fury; wherever there was the appearance or scent of food, the human bloodhounds tracked it out; and, though a general famine raged around; though they were ever trampling on the dead; and

Let us now conclude by a brief recapitulation, and a few practical observations which naturally though the habitations for the living were converted into charnel-houses, nothing could intimidate, or appal, or satisfy, or shock them, till Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, a lady once rich and noble, displayed to them and offered them all her remaining food, the scent of which had attracted them in their search—the bitterest morsel that ever mother or mortal tasted—the remnant of her half-eaten *suckling.* Sixty thousand

* “ Women snatched the food out of the very mouths of their husbands, and sons of their fathers, and mothers of their infants.”—JOSEPHUS, *Wars of the Jews*, book v. ch. x. sect. 3. “ In every house, if there appeared any semblance of food, a battle ensued, and the dearest friends and relations fought with one another; snatching away the miserable provisions of life.” Book vi. ch. iii. sect. 3. “ A woman distinguished by birth and wealth, after she had been plundered by the soldiers of all her other possessions, boiling her own suckling child, ate half of him, and concealing the other half, reserved it for another time.” Book vi. ch. iii. sect. 4. Perhaps the histories of all other nations on earth together do not contain so many well-authenticated instances of the horrid effect of desperate hunger, as are found in that of the Jews, according to this most extraordinary ancient prediction of their celebrated lawgiver.—“ The tender and delicate woman among you which would not adventure the sole of her foot upon the ground, for delicateness and tenderness, her eyes shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son and towards her daughter, and towards her young one, . . . and towards her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things, secretly, in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.” Deut. xxviii. 56, 57. See also Lamentations iv. 3—6.

arise out of the solemn subject which we have been contemplating.

Roman soldiers unremittingly besieged them; they encompassed Jerusalem with a wall, and hemmed them in on every side; they brought down their high and fenced walls to the ground; they slaughtered the slaughterers, they spared not the people; they burned the temple in defiance of the commands, the threats, and the resistance of their general. With it the last hope of all the Jews was extinguished. They raised, at the sight, an universal, but an expiring cry of sorrow and despair. Ten thousand were there slain, and six thousand victims were enveloped in its blaze. The whole city, full of the famished dying, and of the murdered dead, presented no picture but that of despair — no scene but of horror. The aqueducts and the city-sewers were crowded as the last refuge of the hopeless. Two thousand were found dead there, and many were dragged from thence and slain. The Roman soldiers put all indiscriminately to death, and ceased not till they became faint and weary and overpowered with the work of destruction. But they only sheathed the sword to light the torch. They set fire to the city in various places. The flames spread everywhere, and were checked but for a moment by the red streamlets in every street. Jerusalem became heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest. Within the circuit of eight miles, in the space of five months — foes and famine, pillage and pestilence, within — a triple wall around, and besieged every moment from without — eleven hundred thousand human beings perished — though the tale of each of them was a tragedy. Was there ever so concentrated a mass of misery? Could any prophecy be more faithfully and awfully fulfilled? The prospect of his own crucifixion, when Jesus was on the way to Calvary, was not

From all that has gone before, we see the sinful and fallen nature of man, contrasted with the love

more clearly before him, and seemed to affect him less, than the fate of Jerusalem. How full of tenderness, and fraught with truth, was the sympathetic response of the condoling sufferer, to the wailings and lamentations of the women who followed him, when he turned unto them, and beheld the city, which some of them might yet see wrapt in flames and drenched in blood, and said: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming in the which they will say — Blessed are the barren and the womb that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"* No impostor ever betrayed such feelings as a man, nor predicted events so unlikely, astonishing, and true, as an attestation of a divine commission. Jesus revealed the very judgments of God; for such the instrument by whom it was accomplished, interpreted the capture and destruction of Jerusalem, acknowledging that his own power would otherwise have been ineffectual. When eulogized for the victory, Titus disclaimed the praise, affirming that he was only the instrument of executing the sentence of divine justice. And their own historian asserts, in conformity with every declaration of Scripture upon the subject, that the iniquities of the Jews were as unparalleled as their punish-

* 1. e. If such a fire were kindled "in a green tree," which was altogether unfit for fuel, what would be the case in respect of the "dry wood," which was every way ready for the flames?

and long-suffering of the merciful Jehovah. We have seen the hideous nature of sin in the treachery

ment.*—After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, some of the worst of the Jews took refuge in the castle of Masada, where, being closely besieged by the Romans, they, at the persuasion of Eleazar their leader, first murdered their wives and children; then ten men were chosen by lot to slay the rest; this being done, one of the ten was chosen in like manner, to kill the other nine; which, having executed, he set fire to the place, and then stabbed himself. There were nine hundred and sixty who perished in this miserable manner; and only two women and five boys escaped by hiding themselves in the aqueducts under ground.”—BISHOP NEWTON.

“A dreadful massacre was made of the Jews at Lisbon in 1506, for three days together; where men were not suffered to die of their deadly wounds, but were dragged by their mangled limbs into the market-place, where the bodies of the living and the slain, with others half alive and half dead, were burnt together in heaps. The spectacle was so horrible, that it quite astonished the rest of this wretched people, two thousand of whom perished in this barbarous manner. Parents

* Thus Josephus describes the Jews before their ruin by the Romans:—“They were a more atheistical generation than the inhabitants of Sodom.”—“There was no act of wickedness that was not committed: nor can any one imagine any thing so bad that they did not do; endeavouring, publicly as well as privately, to excel one another, both in impiety towards God and injustice to their neighbours.”—“Had not the Romans destroyed them, the earth would have opened and swallowed them, or fire from heaven would have consumed them.”

of Judas ; in the invidious false accusations of the High Priest and others ; in the unrighteous judg-

durst not mourn for their children, nor children sigh for their parents, so that their hearts no doubt were ready to break with grief. . . . A decree was made (in Spain, 1493) that all the Jews should either change their religion, or quit the country in three months. . . . Three hundred thousand, old and young, men and women, went away on foot in one day, not knowing whither to go. Some went into Portugal, others into Navarre, where they conducted with many calamities ; for some became a prey, or perished by famine and pestilence. And therefore others committed themselves to the sea : . . . but there they met with new disasters : for many were sold for slaves when they came on any coast, many were drowned, many burnt in the ships that were set on fire. After this, a plague . . . swept away the rest of the miserable wretches, who were hated by all mankind : so that all that vast number perished . . . except a very few."—*Bishop Patrick, as quoted by Scott.*

"After Jerusalem had been utterly desolated by the Romans, they were continually provoked by the insurrections and daring crimes of the Jews, that they persecuted them even almost to extirpation. So that when the numbers destroyed in the siege (not less than eleven hundred thousand), and the tens of thousands which were afterwards slaughtered year after year in every country are considered, it appears wonderful that there were any remains of them left."—*Scott's Com. on the Bible.*

The wrath of Jehovah has been revealed from heaven expressly for our warning (see 1 Cor. x. 6.), "that we may fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD OUR GOD." The plagues of the Jews have indeed been "made wonderful and

ment of Pilate, against the convictions of his own conscience ; in the vile abuses of the officers, soldiers, and mob, all combining against our blessed Lord ; and in the whole of the complicated sufferings he endured, to make reconciliation for iniquity. Oh ! what is man ! how fickle, wicked, and vain ! one day crying “ Hosanna to the Son of David ;” and a few days after, “ Crucify him ! Crucify him !” And, oh ! how multiplied and distressing were the sufferings of the dear Saviour ! After he had been harassed about, and abused all night, how was he hurried away to the judgment hall, and made a public spectacle so early in the morning ! with what rancour did the barbarous crew run out against him ! how was the vilest of malefactors pre-

of long continuance,” (see Deut. chap. xxviii.) ; and the Babylonish captivity, the punishment of their complicated idolatries, was so inconsiderable, either for the misery or continuance of it, compared with their sufferings since they rejected and crucified their Messiah ; that the superior malignity of that crime, above all which went before it, is legibly written in the punishment. (See Scott's note on Genesis, chap. xlix. 10.—“ This God hath wrought, and it is marvellous in our eyes.”) “ What stronger proofs,” adds Bishop Newton, can we desire of the divine legation of Moses ? How these instances may affect others, I know not, but for myself I must acknowledge, they not only convince, but amaze and astonish me beyond expression.”

ferred before him ! what an infamous and unrighteous sentence was it that they passed upon him ! with what contempt and cruelty was he treated before he came to his cross, and all the while he was hanging upon it ! And who knows the distress he underwent in his body, and the still greater anguish of soul that he felt, under the forsakings of his Father and his God ! Oh ! the astonishing patience and love of the dying Redeemer ! that he would silently and willingly undergo all this, in the room and stead of sinners, and be contented to be remembered with transgressors ! With what holy bravery did he own his true character, whatsoever it might cost him ! how calm was he under all injurious accusations and affronts ! and how was he led as a sheep to the slaughter ! What clear accomplishments were verified in him of ancient prophecies, concerning the Messiah in his suffering character !* And

* See Psalms ii. xii. 1, 6, 7, 16, 18 ; xxxv. 7. 11. 12 ; lxix. 20, 21 ; cix. 2, 3. 5. 25 ; cxviii. 22. Dan. ix. 26. Zech. xiii. 7 ; xii. 10. Isaiah liii. &c. &c. The Jews not understanding what Christ meant by his " lifting up," (John viii. 28 ; xii. 32, 33), and not knowing that he had foretold his crucifixion to his Apostles (Matt. xx. 19), instead of finally stoning him—the death appointed by their law (Levit. xxiv. 16.) for blasphemy (Matt. xxvi. 65), more than once menaced against the Saviour (John viii. 59, x. 33), and actually inflicted upon

what honourable testimonies were given to him amidst all his disgrace! by the prodigies that appeared at his death; by Pilate, who bore witness to him as an innocent person, and as the King of the Jews; by the centurion, who was forced to own him to be the Son of God; by Joseph of Arimathea, who gave him a reputable burial; and by the good women, whose love carried them above their fears of danger, that they might be eye-witnesses of all that passed, and testify their affectionate respect to him in a designed embalmment!

Stephen (Acts vii. 58) for that offence, unconsciously delivered him to the predicted Roman cross. Again, the piercing of his side was no part of the Roman sentence, but merely to ascertain his being dead, previously to taking him down from the cross, "that the body might not remain there on the Sabbath-day," which commenced that evening, a few hours after the crucifixion. From his early *giving up the ghost*, however, it was not necessary that a "bone of him should be broken" (Exod. xii. 46. Num. ix. 12. Psal. xxxiv. 20.), like those of the two thieves, his fellow-sufferers (John xix. 32, 33.) How literally all these predictions have been fulfilled!—incidents unparalleled in the whole range of history, and which could have been foreseen by the Almighty alone. They were, certainly, not foreseen by the human agents concerned in their execution; or they would never have contributed to the fulfilment of prophecies referred even by themselves to the Messiah, and therefore verifying the divine mission of him whom they crucified as an imposter.

And how can we sufficiently love and honour him, who thus amazingly loved us, and gave himself for us? He was falsely accused, that we might be honourably acquitted; he was wounded and scourged, that we might be healed by his stripes; he was clothed with a robe of derision, that we might be adorned with a robe of righteousness; he was crowned with thorns, that we might wear a diadem of glory; his kingly office was insulted and ridiculed, that we might obtain royal dignity, as kings to God; he was condemned, that we might be justified; he carried his own cross, and was crucified upon it, that he might bear our sins and sorrows, and the curse due to us, and that we might take up our cross and follow him; he was numbered with transgressors, that we might be numbered with the righteous; he had vinegar to drink, that he might extend to us "the cup of salvation;" he bowed the head, and gave up the ghost, that we might be exalted and live for ever; he was buried in the grave, that he might sanctify it for us; he finished the whole work of our redemption, that no demands of satisfaction to justice might be made upon us; and the benefit of all this extends to sinners of the Gentiles, Romans, and Greeks, as well as Jews.

Oh ! how he was wounded, who heals every disease ! how he was crowned with thorns, who crowns his martyrs with unfading garlands ! how he was stripped naked, who clothes the fields with flowers, and all the world with robes, the universe with glory, and the **dead** with immortality ! And when at the crucifixion, the heavens were confounded, and the earth trembled, and the sun withdrew his shining, and left the world in darkness, how did the blessed Jesus bow, and bear with patient humility, betraying **no** emotion of anger, but enduring without murmuring, all that earth and hell could lay upon him, till he had put the last stroke to the finished picture of perfect patience, and prayed for his murderers ! whom he has been ever since, and is now, ever ready to receive, upon their repentance, not only to pardon, but to a participation of the glories of his kingdom ! Whatever God's power hath done, it can do much more ; but for his **LOVE**, it can go no higher : he hath no greater thing to give than **CHRIST**. Most true it is, that in giving us a being amongst the noblest order of terrestrial creatures—herein is love : in feeding, supporting, and upholding us all our lives long—herein is love : in protecting us from all the dangers that surround us—herein is love : in making all things subservient to our use, our com-

fort, and our happiness—herein is love—great and wonderful love! And yet set all this by his redeeming love in Christ, and it seems nothing. “Herein is LOVE [indeed], not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* “And not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”† Oh, the inexpressible glory of the love of God in Christ!

When the whole universe of heaven and earth sympathised in the sorrows and the sufferings of the Saviour—when all creatures were moved at his passion—when the sun was darkened, and the earth trembled to its centre—when the very rocks were cloven asunder, as if they had sense and sympathy in it; shall sinful man alone be unmoved? Man to whom it appertained, and for whom it hath procured such unspeakable and unimagined blessings! forgiveness of sins—peace with God—free access to him as his adopted children—the pleasures of a holy life—hope abounding in the midst of trials—victory over death—a resurrection of the body to glory—the sight of God as he is, and the eternal enjoyment of him in heaven! Wonderful indeed! imagination, for once, is baffled—wonder itself is exhausted! The Son of God is dead! crucified by his creatures!

* 1 John iv. 10.

† Ibid. chap. ii. verse 2.

Surely, if at any time, the Seraphim of glory have paused on the wing, and the celestial harps hung mute, it must have been when the Creator suffered death by the hands of his creatures—when the Prince of Life yielded up his spirit—when the Lord of Glory was committed to the tomb!* Be astonished, oh heavens, and confounded, O earth! he whom angels obey, whom seraphs adore, before whom they veil their faces, as conscious of their own comparative weakness, or as dazzled with the blaze of his infinite glories—he who created all things, and without whom nothing was created, became man; took upon him the form of a servant;

* “Which things the angels desire to look into.” 1 Peter i. 12.

“According to outward appearances in the estimation of an unthinking world, our Lord, when on the cross, was covered with ignominy; but in the eyes of all holy intelligences, his crucifixion afforded the brightest manifestation of dignity and glory. God the Father now looked down with infinite complacency, and beheld the radiance of all his perfections shining forth with the most resplendent lustre. The price of man's redemption had been stipulated in the councils of eternity, and for the space of four thousand years, countless myriads of the human race had been received into heaven, upon the promise of its payment. The price was now laid down, the reign of slavery was now abolished, and the claims of Satan were eternally silenced. Angels and arch-angels stooped down to pry into the mysteries of redemption, while the unredeemed in heaven perceived, with ineffable delight the glorious medium of their eternal felicity.”—*Rev. J. Russell.*

performed obedience ; submitted to death,—the most infamous death of the cross ; died for sinners ; for his enemies, even when they rose up in rebellion against him—sacrificed for sinners—designed for sinners—accessible to sinners ! Let all the heavens adore him ; and let all the children of men be filled with wonder, and burn with gratitude ! I have shown how his hands and his feet were mangled and pierced ; though, in the one he grasped and upheld multitudes of souls ready to sink into ruin ; and in the other hand, an everlasting inheritance to give them ! I have pictured the blood issuing from his body, but who shall show us the water of life, streaming oceans of spiritual and eternal blessings, from the same source ? I have told how that blood covered his own body, but who can tell how it sprinkles the souls of others—sprinkles many nations ? I have painted the crown of thorns he wore ; but who can paint the crown of glory he purchased ? The sun may be darkened in heaven, and the stars burn dim in the lapse of ages, but the pale face of the dying Redeemer will grow brighter and brighter in glory : for in all this there is a glory, and a height, and a depth, and a length, and a breadth, more than man shall ever comprehend ; but let him never neglect so great a salvation ; let him never lose hold of an atone-

ment made sure by him who cried "it is finished!" and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Let us give ourselves up to his guidance with the docility of children, overpowered by a kindness that we never merited, and a love that stands unaltered by all the perverseness and ingratitude of our stubborn and sinful nature. Had he willed it, myriads of worlds would have sprung up amid the fields of space, peopled with pure, exalted, holy beings, to adore his Godhead, and declare his glory: yet he chose to die by the hands of his creatures on this outcast atom of creation, for the redemption of sinful, fallen man. — "Oh! the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we by his poverty might be made rich!"*

Let us therefore be "clothed with humility,"—man fell by pride, he is restored in a way of humility. He fell by self-dependence, he is saved by self-renunciation. Every thing connected with the cross of Christ opposes the reigning evil of our fallen hearts. Human wisdom receives not the doctrine, human pride comprehends nothing of it. Repentance begins in humility; faith moves in humility as its proper atmosphere, claiming nothing but from the undeserved mercy of God; prayer is

* 2 Corinths. viii. 9

the breathing of humility; justification is a free gift—let that teach us to be humble; salvation is of grace—let that teach us to be humble; holy obedience is the fruit of submission—let that teach us to be humble; every step, every act, every duty, every feeling of a Christian, all is humility. Religion is the remedy of human pride, as it is not so much a science of the understanding as of the heart.

Finally, remember, my Christian reader, that our Lord said, in the midst of his sufferings, “Weep not for me, ye daughters of Jerusalem.”* These sufferings were not intended to excite the sighs of sensibility, and the tears of distress. Sympathy is not the proper return for his love. His sufferings are the objects of our faith, and ought to awaken our gratitude. Neither ought we to vent our wrath against the enemies and crucifiers of our Saviour. Look inwards, O man! search thine own bosom; there dwell the murderers of thy Lord. Thy sins, thy crimes, thine unhallowed desires, and unmortified passions, were the actors in that dreadful scene. The Jews and Romans were but instruments in their hands; but the feeble executioners of that wrath which they provoked and drew down. On these, therefore, ex-

* Luke **xxiii.** 28. Logan.

haust thy vengeance. Bring forth those "emies of thy Saviour, and slay them before his eyes. Then shall ye be joyfully invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb; then shall Jesus manifest himself to you, and shall say unto your souls, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."*

Now, let the angels and elders around the throne of the Most High — the "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" — strike their golden harps in glad hosannas of celestial harmony, "Saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."—And let "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them," respond the joyful hallelujah, for ever crying with fresh ardour, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen."†

* Matthew ix. 2.

† Revelation v. 11, 12, 13, 14.

FINIS.

